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Teacher Turnover in International Schools in Hong Kong

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Goodbye Hong Kong: Teacher Turnover in International Schools in Hong Kong

EdD Dissertation

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EDD)

2012 INTAKE (123-29070)

HONG KONG

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL IN
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Abstract

This study aims at looking into the factors to cause the mobility of international school teachers and the teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong from teacher perspectives analyzed based on two theoretical frameworks. One is Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, American Federation of Teachers, 2009) and the other is Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (Mobley, 1982). The Push and Pull theory guided the research to explore factors which pushed expatriate teachers to work abroad and pulled them to choose to work in Hong Kong. The other framework, Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (1982), was used to explore the reasons for causing expatriate teachers to determine their departure.

The subject of the present study is expatriate international school teachers in Hong Kong. A mixed method approach was used to collect the data – this was a combination of quantitative data collected by an online survey from 94 participants and further qualitative data collected from 19 follow-up interviews.

The research finds that looking for job opportunities is the main push factor to motivate expatriate teachers to teach overseas. Another unique push factor is "travelling and exploring the world". This confirms the existence of wanderlust factors. There are two major pull factors to cause expatriate teachers to choose Hong Kong as their destination. One is the organization factor which involves "salary", "income package" and "professional development" and the other is an individual non-work factor including "desire to work and live in different cultures". The findings reveal that the majority of teachers were very satisfied with their teaching life in Hong Kong but they still had a high tendency to leave. Among the complex considerations, individual non-work variables like family matters and living conditions are still the most influential to influence their retention decision. Based on the teachers' sharing, turnover in the international schools is comparatively higher than local schools but the turnover rate among the international schools is quite diverse. Some top international schools are able to retain their staff successfully with benefits and/or development strategies.

Dedication and Acknowledgements

This is a long learning journey for me. In these 7 years, I experienced a lot of challenges. Without the support from my family, my Supervisor, cohort classmates and a number of volunteers, I don't think I can finish this journey. Therefore, it is with great pleasure I finally have the opportunity to formally acknowledge them here.

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Last but not least, I would like to thank my husband, Ka Man, and my children, Candace and Clement, for their support. I am a lucky person to have them to go over this learning journey.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: Wong, Kit Ming (Ruth) DATE: October 31, 2019

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“Last year, I left the state-school system to pursue a teaching job abroad. I now work at a British international school and, unsurprisingly, the workload remains just as substantial..... My move abroad was a temporary adventure; I signed a two-year contract intent on returning home upon its completion. The thought of returning to the state-school system is causing me considerable anxiety.” (TES, 2015, p.1)

The writer of this text was a teacher working at an overseas British international school. She expressed her struggles with the decision of returning home and back to her home country's state education system. Teaching abroad is regarded as an adventure by some international school teachers. In reality, an international education career is full of attractions with salary incentives, professional development, and easy travel throughout the region amongst other advantages (Bierbower, 2013). Meanwhile, finding a quality teaching job can be extremely difficult in some western countries but teaching abroad is just the opposite. There are thousands of job vacancies and recruits every year overseas. Teaching at international schools gives a stepping stone for some fresh education graduates to start their career. Some teachers live like a traveler. They live in multiple countries in a short period of time to explore their life. This may in part explain the reason for high teacher turnover rate in some international schools.

The literature focuses more on the development of international schools and international education on the students (Joslin, 2002). Comparatively there is less literature to look into the turnover and mobility of international school teachers. These teachers may “come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds” (Stirzaker, 2004, p. 45). Literature tends to regard teacher turnover as commonplace in international schools (Yamato, 2003; Cambridge, 2002; Hayden, 2006; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Tarry, 2011). High staff turnover is regarded as one of the characteristics of international schools

(Hayden and Thompson, 1998). From the perspective of school administration, the recruitment of administrators and teachers in international schools is a challenge to the international school operators (Hayden, 2006). However, the mobility of international school teachers is notable. They tend to teach relatively shortly in a particular country and then move to teach in other countries (MacBeath, 2012). For some international teachers, teaching abroad is a way to explore adventure or explore the world. Although the mobility of teachers happens often in the international schools, surprisingly, this has not been well explored or documented in research studies.

A direct negative impact of high staff turnover is harmful to continuity of school development. Black and Armstrong (1995) highlighted, the restrictions to staff development were caused by the large turnover of staff in many international schools. High mobility of staff brings a challenge for school leaders to effectively set up a long-term plan (Leggate and Thompson, 1997) and also represents potential costs to organizations in terms of the disruption of ongoing activities and loss of valuable human resources (Sousa-Poza and Henneberger, 2004). The schools need to allocate more resources to recruit new teachers. Overseas recruitment is actually costly and the international school recruiters need to compete with global education recruiters by offering attractive rewards and income packages. Schools also need to invest a lot to provide in-serving professional training opportunities to assist these new hires to develop their professionalism and adapt to the institutional cultures and train new staff (Lee, et al., 2012). Apart from the influence on the schools, a number of studies, for instance, Ingersoll, 2001; Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012 also pointed out potential negative effects of high teacher turnover on student learning.

Yamato (2003) describes the existence of the phenomenon of international school teacher turnover in Hong Kong but it lacks the proof of the literature. Actually, little has been written about international schools in Hong Kong (Yamato and Bray, 2002; McLeod Mok, 2009; Shaw, 2010; Ngan, 2013). The issue of international schools is overlooked probably because it is not a mainstream in

the Hong Kong education system. Most of the international schools in Hong Kong are operated on a self-financing basis and classified within the private school sector in Hong Kong. The data released in public statistics reports is more related to the schools and students, for instance, there were 38,868 students studying at international schools in 2018/19, 149 non-local kindergartens, 46 primary English Schools Foundation's schools (ESF) and other international schools and 34 secondary ESF and other international schools and one special school (EDB, 2019a). However, statistics for international school teachers are not available. Though the EDB collected the data of teacher turnover under the heading "Wastage Rate of Teachers" (EDB, 2019a, p.1), these figures only cover the turnover of local schools excluding English Schools Foundation (ESF) Schools, i.e. the largest international school operator, and private international schools. The international school sector is expanding in Hong Kong and the number of schools continues to increase (Yamato, 2003; Ng, 2012) since the Government supports the development of the international school sector to meet the demand for non-local families to work or invest in Hong Kong (EDB, 2019a). This will be elaborated in the next chapter about international schools in Hong Kong.

International schools in Hong Kong offer non-local curricula and thus their teachers are mainly expatriate teachers. Some of them were foreign residents in Hong Kong. They may be Hong Kong permanent residents. However, most of the international school teachers were recruited overseas and they are working in Hong Kong with an employment visa. Compared to local teachers, this group of teachers seems to work in Hong Kong for a short period of time. As Yamato (2003) comments, the issue of teacher turnover is more common and frequently occurs in international schools than local schools. The teacher turnover rate in Hong Kong is around 5% (EDB, 2019a) but there is no official figure to indicate the turnover rate of international school teachers in Hong Kong. However, it is reflected in a large recruitment activity in international schools. The report made by Olczak (2012) indicated Hong Kong International School (HKIS), one of the largest international schools, hired between 20 and 30 teachers every year to fill the vacant teaching positions.

This phenomenon was noted also in the international school which this study's researcher is serving. The researcher has been serving in this international school for 10 years. The turnover rate of this school is usually more than 10% and it was even higher for some years. Due to the leave of some teachers, the school needs to hire a lot of new teachers every year. The researcher was one of the administrators who was responsible for supporting these new teachers through the New Hires' Orientation in August. She assisted new expatriate teachers to settle down in Hong Kong including picking them up from the airport, assisting them to find flats and register with the Hong Kong Education Bureau. In these few years, the biggest group she helped had 31 new teachers and the smallest group also had 12 new teachers. It seems to her that expatriate teachers just stayed to work in Hong Kong for a couple of years and then returned to their home country or moved to work in other countries. As a local Hong Kong staff, she often wonders what motivated these young expatriate teachers to leave home to work and live in a foreign place and why they left just after working for a couple of years. From her colleagues' sharing, she heard different reasons for their departure in terms of different personal reasons, retirement, relocation or seeking better job opportunities or even related to living conditions in Hong Kong. This aroused her curiosity of looking into the mobility of international school teachers in Hong Kong.

Despite the growing market of international schools in Hong Kong, little research is about the international school teachers. Their mobility is assumed but not investigated in empirical research. Therefore, this study tries to reveal this phenomenon and explore the factors of teacher mobility. It looks into the factors causing international school teachers to move in and move out of Hong Kong and identifies the reasons for leading these expatriate teachers to leave Hong Kong. Hopefully this research can fill the gap of knowledge about teacher turnover and allow us to understand the reasons of departure from the interpretation of international school teachers themselves.

Aims and Research Questions

This study aims at looking into the factors to cause the mobility of international school teachers and the teacher turnover in the international schools in Hong Kong from teacher perspectives analyzed based on two theoretical frameworks. One is Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), 2009) and the other is Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (1982). The Push and Pull theory guided the research to explore factors which pushed expatriate teachers to work abroad and factors which pulled them to choose to work in Hong Kong. The other framework, Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (1982), was used to explore the reasons for causing expatriate teachers to determine their departure.

The subjects of the present study were expatriate international school teachers in Hong Kong. A mixed method approach was used to collect the data – this was a combination of quantitative data collected by an online survey from 94 participants and further qualitative data collected from 19 follow-up interviews. This study explored the following research questions:

1. What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?
2. What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong?
3. What are the thoughts of teacher turnover from the experience of international school teachers in Hong Kong?

Since the setting of the study is about international schools, however, as Woo (2014) claimed, the definition of international school is often unclear and little research has been documented about international schools in Hong Kong. Before discussing the issue of teacher mobility, the background of international schools was explored in the next chapter. Then it followed by literature reviews on the issue of teacher mobility and turnover and the theoretical frameworks of this present study - Push

and Pull theory and Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover. Methodology and Methods were then elaborated to explain why a mixed method approach was used to collect the data. Next, the findings from quantitative data and qualitative data were presented in Chapters 5 and 6. The findings were then discussion in the Chapter of Discussion. The last chapter is Conclusions which included the implications of the present study and its limitations and suggestions.

Chapter 2: Context

Definition of International Schools

The purpose of this study is to know more about the mobility of international school teachers and teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong. Since the setting of this study is international schools, it is essential to identify if the subjects were from the international schools. But what do international schools refer to? It is asked as the term “international school” is often fraught with ambiguity (Woo, 2014; Hayden and Thompson, 1995).

In general, the term “international school” may mean multicultural learning environment with diverse nationalities of students (Pearce, 2013). It may also mean independent educational institutions or an institution which offers international recognized qualifications. From a marketing sense, this term “international school” is gaining currency since it is an attraction for wealthy families though these schools charge expensive tuition fees (Lee and Walker, 2012).

Some scholars identify international schools based on their underpinning values. International schools are regarded as “internationally-minded schools” (Slough-Kuss, 2014, p.219) and it is claimed that they promote universal values (Gellar, 2002). But some interpret it in a multicultural sense. International schools are places which are “composed of a multitude of groups who have different patterns of thinking and sets of values” (Stirzaker, 2004, p. 45) like Cambridge and Thompson (2004), they suggest defining international schools by their mission statements. However, Hayden and Thompson (1995) argue that individuals in international schools “may or may not share an underlying educational philosophy” (p.13). Jonietz and Harris (1991) define an international school by their curriculum, for example international education programs like International Baccalaureate (IB). Some scholars define it by their student intakes including the nationalities of students (Preston, 2001). Woo (2014) makes a broader sense of the definition of international schools in terms of nationalities

of students or teachers, the administration, mission, reputation and even funding. From these debates, we can see the complexities of identifying the term “international school”.

In Hong Kong, it is also debatable to define the schools as international schools. Similar to other scholars, Bray and Yamato (2003) defined it based on their curriculum or student nationalities but the Hong Kong Education Bureau officially defines those schools that offer non-local education as international schools. According to a government publication published by the Education Department (1995) (Education Department is a previous name of Education Bureau in Hong Kong), international schools are those schools “operated with curricula designed for the needs of a particular cultural, racial or linguistic group or for students wishing to pursue their studies overseas.” (pp.4-5) and the definition was changed later to “those schools offering full non-local curricula, enrolling students who do not sit for local examinations” (EDB, 2012, p.1).

However, some of these schools do not truly reflect “international” in nature. On the contrary they offer national curriculum based on a particular country for students from that country like Japanese International School and Korean International (Bray and Yamato, 2003). Other schools offer foreign curricula but their students are mainly from Hong Kong and some from different countries. More and more new international schools in Hong Kong are oriented towards the International Baccalaureate (IB) programs and are popular for local families. In 2000/2001, there were only seven schools operating IB programs but now there are 61 schools in Hong Kong running different IB programs (IBO, 2019).

From the global or local literature, we can see the complexities involved in defining the term “international schools” as there is a lack of consensus to define what international schools mean when it is viewed from different perspectives. If we define the international schools based on the student intakes, it is more confused as some schools named international schools actually have a high

population of local Hong Kong students. On the contrary, some schools accept non-Chinese students but they are regarded as local schools as they offer a local curriculum. Hence, this study still followed the official definition set by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong i.e. “those schools offering full non-local curricula, enrolling students who do not sit for local examination” (EDB, 2012, p.1) as international schools as this is an official classification of schools and commonly accepted definition by public and schools in Hong Kong. In this study, expatriate teachers serving in these schools were eligible for being the research subjects.

Development of International Schools

Little research has documented the international schools especially the research from the perspective of teachers regarding their mobility. Additionally, this education sector is quite unique and this market is growing rapidly especially in Asia, it is worthwhile looking into its development as it may imply more job opportunities with higher mobility of teachers and high rates of teacher turnover. This study may lead to a better understanding of this growing education sector and teachers working in it.

It is believed that the first international school existed in the 1920s (Leggate and Thompson, 1997) i.e. the International School of Geneva founded in 1924. It was the first school to be called “international’ in its name (Geneva, 2015). This school was founded to offer education to students whose parents were the expatriate staff of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office since they established their headquarters in Geneva in 1920.

Yokohama International School established in Japan also in 1924 was the second school to call themselves an “International School”. It was formed after the Great Kanto Earthquake for foreign students in Yokohama (Stanworth, 2015). Primarily, early international schools were established for the children of embassy staff, missionaries, military and army families, merchants to receive similar

education to that in their host country.

In response to the growth of multinational organizations and globalization, the demand for international schools by expatriate families sharply increased. There were estimated to be 50 international schools globally in the 1960s. ISC Research data indicates there are now over 10,000 international schools worldwide (ISC, 2019). Many of these schools were essentially national schools which offered curriculum based on their host country and so those expatriate students could return home for university education. According to Pearce (2001), “in 1997 there were 1,724 institutions in 174 countries, following at least 11 different systems and serving over one million students. This is due to a number of factors such as increasingly cheap travel, the rapid growth of multinational corporations and the trend towards keeping children with the family instead of sending them to boarding school” (p.3). Over time, globalization created a market for international education for those parents who were dissatisfied with their local education system and preferred international programs, for instance, International Baccalaureate (IB) programs or the International GCSE (IGCSE) (Fox, 1985).

The International Baccalaureate (IB) was founded in 1968 in Geneva. It promotes international education through four programs for students aged 3 to 19. The programs promote skills development in areas of intelligence, personal development, emotions, and social development to prepare students to live, learn and work in a globalizing world. Its mission is to create a better world through education (IBO, 2019). Schools authorized by the IB organization to offer any of four IB programs are known as IB World Schools. Over the last decade, the number of IB schools has grown to more than 4700 schools worldwide (IBO, 2019). A rapid growth of IB programs implies its rising impact in the international education sector (Hayden, 2006). Bunnell (2005) also commented that the IB has become the main international curriculum among international schools. Lee, et al. (2012) concluded IB schools successfully built a ‘brand’ for representing an international curriculum,

multicultural student body, global portability curriculum and qualification system (Heyward, 2002) and thus are recognized by top universities in the world.

The market of international schools continues to have significant growth. In 2015, 658 schools were established globally, 96 in Africa, 191 in Americas, 293 in Asia, 70 in Europe and 8 in Oceania, according to the statistics from International School Consultancy Group (ISC, 2015). It is predicted to reach 11,000 schools in 2024 (Custer, 2014) and this growth will continue. The Chairman of ISC, Nicholas Brummitt estimated 8.26 million students will be attending international schools around the world by 2025 (Higgitt, 2015). The growth is stimulated by the demand for quality education and the growing wealth of the middle class who can afford higher education fees. The international schools are popular among the wealthy families since international schools tend to have “more learning and IT resources, more up-to-date facilities, and lower teacher to student ratios” (Lee and Walker, 2012, p. 306)

The international schools do not serve only expatriate students anymore. In Hong Kong, 24% of international school students are local students in 2018/2019 (EDB, 2019b). Their parents expected their children to enroll in foreign university degrees. This phenomenon is common in Asia due to the blooming economic conditions in Asia, particularly in China. Asian parents regard international schools as an attractive option because of the use of English as the main medium of instructions and the international curriculum. This provides a more promising link to world class universities (ISC, 2019). Additionally, international schools are well equipped with better facilities and they adopt advanced technology to enhance teaching and learning (Metro Star, 2015). The number of International schools in China is expected to rise significantly over other countries in the world especially after the change in the law which allows Chinese-foreign cooperation programs to enroll both Chinese nationals and foreign students (Custer, 2014).

International Schools in Hong Kong

As mentioned before little has been written about international schools in Hong Kong. The development of international schools in Hong Kong was related to the history of Hong Kong. Before handover to China in 1997, Hong Kong was ruled by Britain as a colony for more than 150 years. Due to the colonial administration, “the governors were selected from the British colonial service and most of its officers were also expatriate veterans” (Carroll, 2007, p.4). For the economy, Hong Kong’s laissez-faire system attracted a lot of foreign investors. For the children of these expatriate officers and merchants, there were some small units of schools for foreigners run by private sectors before the 1840s (Sweeting, 1990). Until 1855, a school financed by public subscriptions was opened with over 100 students from 10 nationalities. Bray and Yamato (2003) claimed this was the first international school in Hong Kong. Though it was not named as “International School”, it enrolled foreign students and it was later developed to become the King George V School. This school was replaced by other institutions. One successor institution was the Kowloon British School established by the Government in 1902 and this was the former school of King George V School, one of the oldest international schools in Hong Kong (Sweeting, 1990) and was a historical British school in Hong Kong for children of British government officers or foreigners (KGV, 2015).

Early international schools in Hong Kong mainly served the expatriate community. In the early 1970s, there were only about 12 international schools and represented a small part of Hong Kong education sectors. However, 1997 was a critical year in Hong Kong’s history since the sovereignty of Hong Kong was transferred from the United Kingdom to The People’s Republic of China. Prior to the handover, waves of mass migrations to western countries took place. For example, tens of thousands of Hongkongers moved to Vancouver (Asingh, 2013). Some years later, many families returned to Hong Kong and chose to enroll their children in international schools to continue the types of education that they had received abroad (Bray and Yamato, 2003). This changed the student body of international schools from purely expatriates to more repatriate children returning

from other countries.

Additionally, more and more local students moved from mainstream local schools to an alternative foreign curriculum due to the education reforms in the 1990s (Ng, 2012). The most influential one was the implementation of the mother tongue teaching policy due to the political transition from the United Kingdom to Mainland China. In September 1997, the Education Department issued the Guidance for Secondary School on Medium of Instructions (MOI) to encourage secondary schools to use Chinese as a medium of instructions and only those schools which satisfied English language requirements could continue to use English as MOI. Finally, a majority of secondary schools, over 300 schools, had to use Chinese as a medium of instructions and only 114 secondary schools were allowed to use English as a medium of instructions (Cheng, 2009). The mother-tongue policy received strong resistance from those parents who valued English more and believed that English was fundamental to higher education and improved prospects. As a result, international schools have become popular for these parents (Ng, 2012; Bray and Yamato, 2003).

It was shown by the increasing number of international schools. It increased by 21.4% between 1998 and 2008, from 56 to 68. The number of students enrolled also increased by 30.77% to 30,882 (Ng, 2012). Recently, based on EDB's statistics (EDB, 2019a), the number of international schools included 149 non-local kindergartens, 46 primary English Schools Foundation's schools (ESF) and other international schools and 34 secondary ESF and other international schools. Except for some English Schools Foundation (ESF)'s schools which are subsidized by the Hong Kong Government, most of the international schools are private schools.

The growing number of international schools was attributed to growing prosperity which allowed an increasing number of middle class to afford the higher tuition fees of international schools (Yamato, 2003). As noted by Bray and Yamato (2003), international schools were considered as an education

with an international perspective and a less pressurized curriculum. Recently, the places of international schools have become more precious because of the booming economy in China. Some well-off mainland immigrants send their children to international schools instead of mainstream local schools. Representatives of trade commissions, chambers of commerce and global business companies expressed their frustrations about insufficient places of international schools for expatriate families and made requests to extend the number of international school places (EDB, 2012).

In response to the demand for school places from overseas families living in Hong Kong, the government supports the development and expansion of the international school sector in Hong Kong. Two government vacant premises in Tai Po and Aberdeen were allocated to the ESOL Education and Harbour School Foundation and opened in 2016/2017. Other international school operators Malvern College Hong Kong, Shrewsbury International School Hong Kong and the French International School were allocated a site in Science Park and Tseung Kwan O to open their schools in 2018/2019 (GovHK, Press Release, 2015). It is estimated by the Hong Kong Education Bureau that the new schools created 780 secondary places and 3,490 primary places. Five more international operators are applying to allocate 80 per cent more school places to non-local students (Rebecca, 2015).

With the growth of international schools in Hong Kong, the demand for expatriate teachers is high. Unfortunately, the official statistics published by the Education Bureau do not include the number of international school teachers in Hong Kong (EDB, 2019a). However, from the data released by the Hong Kong Immigration Department, 3,219 expatriate teachers applied for an employment visa in 2014 (IMMD, 2015) and this increased to 3,986 in 2018 (IMMD, 2019). In Hong Kong if expatriate teachers continually live in Hong Kong for more than 7 years, they can be eligible to become permanent Hong Kong citizens and they can be employed in Hong Kong without the employment visa. Thus, the number of expatriate international school teachers are much higher than 3,986 but this

figure projects the number of expatriate teachers living less than 7 years in Hong Kong.

For these expatriate teachers, Hong Kong is not their home country. It is interesting to know what motivated them to work in Hong Kong and if they would continue to stay or leave and the extent of the issue of turnover. Several studies (Hayden, 2006; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Tarry, 2011) show a high teacher turnover in international schools in different countries. However, little literature has been published on teacher turnover about international schools in Hong Kong. With the expansion of this education sector, the mobility of these expatriate teachers in Hong Kong is worth noting. The topic of teacher turnover received considerable attention in recent years. Due to a high teacher turnover in the United States, the impacts and reasons of teacher turnover have been widely investigated. Though the setting of research is different from the international schools, this provides an excellent research framework to look into the matter of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong. These studies were reviewed in the next chapter about the issue of teacher turnover and the theoretical frameworks of this research.

Chapter 3: Literature Review and Relevant Theoretical and Conceptual Ideas

In the previous chapter, the rapid development of international schools globally was discussed. As mentioned, in the last decade, research about this sector focused more on the development of international and international education (Joslin, 2002). The area of international school teachers is still under researched. The issue of teacher turnover is regarded as a common phenomenon in this sector (Hayden, 2006; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Tarry, 2011) or one of the characteristics of international schools (Hayden and Thompson, 1998).

This chapter consists of past literature discussing teacher turnover not limited to the international schools. This review of previous research not only provides a critical evaluation of the findings but also analyzes the research focus and the research methods to clarify the gap that the current research attempts to fill and the contribution that can be made in this area.

What is teacher turnover?

From the definition of Human Resources Management, “turnover” means “the number of employees hired to replace those who left” (BD, 2016, p.1). Mobley (1982) defined “turnover” from the perspective of individuals as “the cessation of membership in an organization by an individual” (p. 10).

Regarding the definition of teacher turnover, Ingersoll (2001) defined it as annual changes in the teacher position. He further explained it as teachers leaving their jobs for reasons other than retirement. Some researchers classified the component of turnover in more detail. They referred to it as “teacher attrition” for those who leave the occupation of teaching entirely and called it “teacher migration” if the teachers transfer or move to different teaching jobs in other schools (Ingersoll, 2001). In this study, teacher turnover refers to the act of teachers leaving their serving

schools for reasons other than retirement as the definition by other researchers (Wong and Li, 1995; Sieling, 2012). More specifically, it focuses on teachers moving out of Hong Kong but not moving to teach in other schools in Hong Kong.

Issue of teacher turnover

Over the last two decades, due to the high teacher turnover rates in the United States, an extensive number of empirical analyses on teacher turnover were reported. Although these studies analyzed the teacher turnover not in the international setting, they offered a theoretical basis for analysis. They also reflect different scopes of interest towards the issue in terms of economic perspective or individual perspective. From the perspective of economic models, studies have looked into the departure of teachers as actual turnover and its associated impacts. As opposed to the economic models on actual turnover, other researchers, especially psychologists, largely focus on the significance of subjective experience of work and look into the main determinants of turnover from the individual perspective (Sousa-Poza and Henneberger, 2004; Cardy and Lengenick-Hall, 2011; Douglas, 2015). As stated previously this study's researcher is curious about what motivate international school teachers for their mobility from teacher perspectives and hopes to look into the issue from their first person's experience and sharing.

Teacher turnover in context of U.S. schools

In some countries, the issue of teacher turnover is a distinct problem. For instance, in Canada, the teacher turnover rate is severe in rural and remote areas (UBC, 2015). But in the United States, teacher retention is regarded as a national crisis (Hunt and Carroll, 2003) because the teacher turnover has become a statewide problem for public school districts especially those schools with high-poverty, high minority and low performing are facing the problem of a higher percentage of new teachers. The problem of teacher turnover has alerted public and policymakers. The news of teacher turnover was often reported in social media (e.g. Bock, 2015; Weingarten, 2015; Hudson,

2015; Philips, 2015). According to the news, only 70% of the new teachers continued to teach after two years and only 55% were staying in the same school (Kentucky Board of Education, 2015). The statewide teacher turnover rate was 14.84% during the 2014-15 school year (Chaffin, 2015). Compared to the past 5 years, the rate keeps rising, 14.12% in 2013-14; 14.33% in 2012-13; 12.13% in 2011-12 and 11.17% in 2010-11 (Chaffin, 2015). Based on the report, this turnover problem is getting worse in the high-need schools with low test scores, poverty, segregation and inequitable funding (Weingarten, 2015). Researchers seem to agree that a turnover rate over 10% is unacceptable in the public schools and new teachers have a higher tendency to leave the teaching career. Schools with high-poverty and low performance face a higher problem of turnover.

A high teacher turnover rate stimulated a lot of research looking at the impacts of teacher turnover (Craig, 2017). Economists estimate the loss of teachers cost the nation's school districts about \$2.2 billion a year in the United States (Bock, 2015). Several educational studies have noted negative effects of the teacher turnover and loss to schools. Teacher turnover is associated with the negative impacts from different perspectives. More scholars commented its impact on student achievements (Ingersoll, 2001; Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012), difficulty in sustaining curricular continuity (Mancuso, 2010) and fluctuation of instructional goals and practices (Sieling, 2012). Thus, a high teacher turnover leads to disruption to school performance (Ingersoll, 2001). From the organization perspective, turnover leads to challenge of recruitment (Hayden, 2006; Benson, 2011, Sieling, 2012), considerable costs on the administration for recruitment, additional hiring and training (Tamir, 2010) and loss of school experience (Leggate and Thompson, 1997) and interruption to staff development (Sieling, 2012). From the teacher perspectives, a staff departure may lead to heavier workload to the others. Bock (2015) criticized that the departure of teachers impacted the class structures of the schools when students were re-allocated to other existing teachers and this bumped up the class size. In consideration of the impacts of teacher turnover, though some researchers (e.g. Mobley, 1982) asserted the positive effect of teacher turnover like displacing poor performers,

substantial studies on the issue of teacher turnover in the United States tend to indicate its negative impacts more.

Another focus of the research about teacher turnover is to investigate the reasons for causing teachers to leave (e.g. Cho, 2005; Ogundimu, 2014; Shen, 2014) in order to improve the turnover situation. These studies appear to look at the reasons from different perspectives from the relationship to the policy (Cho, 2005), to organizational conditions of schools for instances, perceptions towards the school (Ezzeldine, 2004), school characteristics (Mancuso, 2010), administrative and collegial supports (Odland and Ruzicka, 2009), financial incentive to retain teachers (Brooks and Hill, 2004) and to individual level factors like personal characteristics (Ingersoll, 2001). The intention of these studies is to find ways to improve the turnover situation, however, they looked into the issue from a particular factor. Perhaps the reasons for teaching leaving involve multiple inter-played reasons.

The decision of job departure may not be caused by a single factor but the interactions of multiple factors. As Naumann (1992) describes, “turnover is a behavioral outcome of a complex process” (p.504). Psychologists like to look into the main determinants of turnover intentions and thus there is a vast literature on the analysis of turnover intentions which reflects the subjective probability of changing a job by individuals (Mobley, 1982; Sousa-Poza and Henneberger, 2004; Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Douglas, 2015). Among them, Mobley’s turnover model (1977) provides a classic theoretical basis for analyzing staff’s decisions whether to stay or leave (Mobley, 1977; Mobley 1982; Steers, et.al., 1979). In 1977, Mobley developed a model of the turnover process. This is the first model to logically exhibit the complex decision-making for the turnover process in multiple stages when an employee determines to leave or to stay by a flowchart. The model identified several intervening factors that influence the effect of job satisfaction and explained how dissatisfaction mediates the thoughts of resignation. Though Steers, et al. (1979) suggest another turnover process

model which emphasizes on the psychological and behavioral mechanisms used by staff to determine their decision to stay or leave, the model of Mobley is still a landmark conceptual framework adapted by other researchers to elucidate the turnover prediction and the validity of the model was examined and regarded as accurate predictors (Hom, et al., 1984).

In contrast to the Mobley's model, several studies have suggested other frameworks to explain teacher turnover other than individual characteristics merely. Ingersoll (2001) suggests a strong correlation between teacher turnover and individual characteristics and condition of schools. Similarly, Simon and Johnson (2013) analyzed the reason why teachers left high-poverty schools also based on the organization theory and attributed to poor working conditions. Chapman's Teacher Attribution Model (Chapman, 1984) is based on social learning theory. Chapman suggested that teacher retention is a function of multiple factors including both personal factors and social factors. Among these, Chapman (1984) asserts the external factors have the most direct influence on teacher turnover. These models treat the study of teacher turnover not from a single factor but connect to multiple factors.

Though the study of teacher turnover has gained considerable attention in recent years and numerous studies have been carried out, most of these studies were not conducted in the international school setting as Odland (2008) commented little is known about the teacher turnover in international schools and shortage of such studies from international schools still remains. The international schools are a quite unique education sector and international school teachers especially for those teaching abroad is a unique group of teaching professionals. It is interesting to understand their departure reasons and see if they are similar to other education sectors. The following is the limited research about teacher turnover in international schools.

Research of teacher turnover in the International Schools

Though few studies have examined the teacher turnover in international schools, it does not mean that this is not an issue. On the contrary, high turnover rate is common in the international schools based on the studies (e.g. Cambridge, 2002; Hayden, 2006; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Tarry, 2011) and high rate of staff turnover is even regarded as one of the features of international schools. Odland and Ruzicka (2009) quote the data from the Council of International Schools that the 3193 teachers left from a total population of 22,098 in 270 international schools. The turnover rate, 14.4 per cent, was close to the percentages for US schools.

In the early study about the cause of teacher turnover in international schools, personal characteristics was the focus. For instance, Cambridge (2002) classified international school teachers in 3 categories: childless career professionals, career professionals with families and maverick. Different categories of teachers were motivated by different incentives which influence their retention decision. It is consistent with other research (Ingersoll, 2001; Elfers, et al., 2006) that claimed a strong connection between turnover and individual characteristics. Apart from family background, some studies have consistently found that younger teachers have a high tendency to leave. Like Ingersoll (2001), he explained “teachers’ decisions whether to stay or leave the teaching professional are related to their age” (p. 502). The teacher turnover follows a pattern of U-shaped curve. Younger teachers have very high rates of departure. The middle-aged tend to settle down and the turnover rate rises again in retirement years. This may be more magnified in international schools since single young teachers like to teach abroad as an adventure. All these studies were proved by the statistics findings on teacher characteristics like family background or age or positions. However, they lack the interpretation from teachers themselves. We might assume the young teachers would leave but we don’t know what led them to leave. Is it a voluntary move? If that is, it can be a positive change for young teachers to pursue for their career life. For such a case, the interpretation is more meaningful than conclusions purely based on the statistical data.

Another research direction is looking at the effect of school leadership on teacher turnover. Several studies (Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Mancuso, 2010; Benson, 2011) investigated the relationship between the administrative leadership and expatriate teacher turnover. Their findings aligned with the study of Ingersoll (2001) that the administrative leadership was an influential determinant of the decision to leave. For instance, the study of Odland and Ruzicka (2009) revealed the top three causal factors to cause departure including administrative leadership, compensation and personal circumstances. However, their study perhaps was limited by its own setting that was to explore the turnover of first year teachers. It is doubtful if the implication is able to apply for those who stayed long.

Compared to previous studies, the study of Odland and Ruzicka (2009) was significant as they discovered a distinctive factor for causing international school teachers to leave that was to travel. Some expatriate teachers regarded teaching life as a journey. Experience of new cultures and travelling to new countries motivated them to move. Another distinctive factor found in Odland and Ruzicka's study (2009) is "misrepresentation during recruitment" (p. 21). They illustrated that some teachers felt a "mismatch between what was told in the interview and what the real situation was" (p. 21). Expatriate teachers may not realize their teaching and living life in a new country fully since the information collected during the recruitment was probably superficial. Actually, there is a wide difference in the cost of living in various countries (Benson, 2011) and this is directly related to the income they can actually save. In practice, an induction program assists new staff to adapt to the new environment. Research also showed that inadequate induction is strongly related to early leaver (Stirzaker, 2004). As suggested by Odland and Ruzicka (2009), perhaps, more literature is required to look into the impact of the induction program on turnover.

The study of Mancuso (2010) extended the scope from individual factors to school leadership. It explored the issue of teacher turnover in 578 American overseas schools in South East Asia in terms

of school characteristics, teacher characteristics and organizational conditions. The findings show that “perceived effectiveness of the school head, faculty perceptions of input into decision making, satisfaction with salary, and age as a categorical variable were significant predictors of teacher turnover in AOSs” (p.93). Additionally, supporting the finding of Odland and Ruzicka’s study (2009), Mancuso concluded travelling was one of the high mobility predictors. He described it as “wanderlust” factors (p. 65) that is “a great desire to travel or roam about” (p. 91). He suggested that teachers with the intention of wanderlust “were more likely to be moving regardless of how they feel about their salary, school leadership or other predicting factors” (p. 91). However due to the limitations of research methods utilized which collected data only by a survey called International Teacher Mobility Survey, this study was unable to “deeply explore wanderlust as a factor in a teachers’ decision to stay at or move” (p. 97).

Research about international teacher mobility from the perspective of exploration of different cultures was done by Joslin (2002) and Chandler (2010). Joslin (2002) attempted to explore the issue of cultural factors for teachers working in the international schools including cultural struggles for an expatriate teacher on the relocation process. It also conceptualized the transitional challenges of international teachers by a model of “multi-level cultural influences” (Joslin, 2002, p.34). However, the relationship of cultural factors to teacher turnover was not explored in her study. Though the exploration of different cultures was recognized as a motive for expatriate teachers to work abroad, it has not been further investigated whether it motivated them to move further. Another study by Chandler (2010) looked into another distinctive factor for international schools that is location. His study confirmed that the location is an important factor for international school teachers to determine their selection. Nonetheless, it is weakly connected to their decision to leave. Based on his finding, the location satisfaction is less influential compared to job satisfaction.

Actually, the research related to the mobility and migration of educational professionals is drawing

more attention recently (e.g. Bense, 2016; Vagi and Pivovarova, 2017) even though the data collection on migrant teachers is scarce. Teachers were regarded as one of the most mobile professionals with the “increased international mobility of high-qualified workers in a growing global labour market” (Bense, 2016, p. 38). A study by Caravatti et al., (2014) identified large-scale teacher movements between Canada, United States and United Kingdom over 2000. Another study by Yang, et al. (2018) looks into determinants of western expatriate teachers’ organization commitment in public schools in Adu Dhabi. This study revealed teacher level attributes remained strong predictors of their commitment. The teacher level attributes involved the support in the organization such as collegial relationship and interpersonal support which were “crucial for expatriate teachers to build and sustain their commitment” (Yang, et al., 2018, p.34). Though the setting of this expatriation literature is not about international schools, this expatriation literature explored the life of western expatriate teachers in Adu Dhabi and what challenged them towards overseas work.

Although substantial studies have been done about the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover, such as Naumann (1992) and Ingersoll (2001), the study conducted by Fong (2018) significantly differentiated the analysis based on generational differences, Gen Y and non-Gen Y teachers. This quantitative study involved a total sample size of 116 international school teachers from East Asia, mainly from China. Its statistical analysis found out different motivation factors of job satisfaction connected to contract renewals for teachers in Gen Y and non-Gen Y – “for Gen Y teachers, only the communication factor is statistically significant” but for non-Gen Y, “the factors of supervision and nature of work are statistically significant” (Fong, 2018, p.66). A key implication here is that even in a single determinant of turnover, i.e. job satisfaction here, it is composed of different factors like motivation factors and the effect of them could also vary for different generations for their decision to renew the contract. However, some scholars commented it is over simplistic to predict the retention by merely looking into job dissatisfaction and so some other factors like non-work influences or perceived normative behaviours were overlooked (Hom, et al., 1984).

Unlike other research using quantitative approach to look into the issue of international school teachers, in the study of Anderson (2010), a qualitative approach – case-study analysis approach was used to look at “how expatriate teachers perceive their experiences in international schools and the role that these perceptions may play in their decisions to continue at a school or to seek other employment” (Anderson, 2010, p.3). Though there was a small group of participating teachers with only five participants, rich qualitative data emerged. This study may not look at the issue of teacher mobility or retention directly but provided some understanding of the culture of international schools and what they valued and preferences associated with teaching in the international school. The study with a small sample size may not be able to generalize but it is a good start to document the culture of expatriate teachers in international school settings. It provides some insights to the non-expatriates including the researcher herself to understand the teaching life of expatriate international school teachers.

The latest research conducted by Dos Santos (2019) also employed a qualitative method to explore the teacher turnover determinants of a small group of international school teachers in Fuji. Six international school teachers were interviewed to share their challenges and advantages of their teaching. From their sharing, it is found that “managerial style, negative leadership and limited social networking” (Dos Santos, 2019, p.1) were the causes for them to consider leaving. A sense of respectfulness and simple living style in Fuji were the reasons for them to stay in Fuji. This study supported the previous studies like Odland and Ruzicka (2009) and Mancuso (2010) to attribute the leadership style to the turnover. However, it is worth noting that all subjects in this study were Australian and from the same school. It is doubtful if leadership style is the concerns of teachers in that particular school only or teachers with a similar background or culture.

This study, on the other hand, recognizes the effect of personal factors on the decision of retention and found that “personal factors are more likely to impact the decision to keep teaching at an

international school” (Dos Santos, 2019, p.16). Location satisfaction and school community influenced their decision of teaching in Fuji. Some teachers shared their preference on the tropical environment in Fuji and access to nature. Some teachers decided to stay due to the respect from both parents and students but at the same time limitation of social networking in a rural area could also frustrate them. It implies truly that “there is no one single factor that can guarantee retention of in-service teachers, attract potential pre-service teachers, or cause post-service teachers to leave international schools.” (Dos Santos, 2019, p.1).

Teacher Turnover in International schools in Hong Kong

As mentioned previously, little has been written about international schools in Hong Kong. The issue of international school teacher mobility or turnover in Hong Kong is underreported. As the reason explained by Bray and Yamato (2003), this “sector is widely seen as diverse and outside the mainstream (in Hong Kong)” (p. 70). There were only 21, 912 (6%) primary students and 16,956 (5 %) secondary students studying in the international schools in Hong Kong over the year 2017-2018 (EDB, 2019a).

There were only a few academic studies related to international schools in Hong Kong. It was started by the study of Bray and Leong (1996) looking into secondary international schools. Bray extended this study with Yamato to further explore the operation and historical development of the international schools in Hong Kong (Yamato and Bray, 2002). They provide the overview of this non-main stream education setting in terms of its operating bodies, student population and its curriculum. Currently, more studies focus on international education and teaching and learning (Mcleod Mok, 2009; Shaw, 2010; Ngan, 2013;).

There were no official statistics of international school teacher turnover as the data was not collected by the Hong Kong Education Bureau (EDB). The statistics about teacher turnover released by the EDB

to the public only covers the departure of local school teachers but excludes the turnover rate for ESF and other international schools (EDB, 2019a) because they did not collect personal particulars of teachers in international schools based on the reply from an EDB's statistician. When going through some international school websites, some schools introduced their overview like the number of students and staff but still little information about teacher turnover. It was only implicitly revealed on particular school profiles.

The English Schools Foundation (ESF) is the largest international school organization in Hong Kong. It was founded by the Hong Kong Government in 1967. Now the ESF group of schools have 22 schools (5 kindergartens, 9 primary schools, 4 secondary schools, 1 special school and 3 private independent international schools) with 17,700 students from 75 different countries and with more than 2,500 staff (ESF, 2014). In 2014, the recruitment information was still released on the website of ESF. At that time, it mentioned that ESF group recruited more than 120 expatriate teachers from countries like the UK, US, Canada and Australia (ESF, 2014). However, this information was removed after their update on the website and no staff recruitment and retention information were revealed to the public anymore.

Few of the international schools revealed their situation of teacher turnover implicitly in their websites under the section for teacher employment and, interestingly, the information sounds like a recognition of school achievement. For instance, the Canadian International School of Hong Kong (CDNIS) indicated their retention rate was "healthy" on their website as 32% of their teachers have been working for more than 5 years (CDNIS, 2014). But this description was removed after the website was updated. They just introduced the number of staff they currently have now including 73 academic support and business administrative staff, 66 educational assistants and 169 teachers (CDNIS, 2019). Another school, Chinese International School (CIS), they also highlighted their long service of their teachers with 25% of their teachers have served for more than 10 on recruits section

of the website (CIS, 2014).

Both the websites of Hong Lok Yuen International School Hong Kong (HKYIS), which was called International College Hong Kong now and The International Montessori School (IMS) highlighted their accomplishment of retaining their teachers. On the website of HLYIS in 2014, they posted “the ability to retain staff over a long period of time, which helps to ensure the stability of the teaching and learning environment” (HLYIS, 2014, p.1). Another school, IMS (2014) recognized their low retention rate “a testament to the strength and support of the IMS team at every level.” (IMS, 2014, p. 1). All these staff retention information was removed after the update of the school websites. It is not certain if their removal implied that was not their strength of their schools anymore. Conversely, other non-international schools (which are usually called as local schools in the government documents) rarely mention their retention rate and actually their staffing tends to be very steady and the turnover rate maintains at a very low level, 4.2% for primary trained teachers and 4.7% for secondary trained teachers over the year 2018-2019 (EDB, 2019a). On the contrary, teacher retention seems to be the concern of some international schools. It is valuable if more study can reveal this phenomenon and look into the reason.

As Naumann (1992) describes, “turnover is a behavioral outcome of a complex process” (p. 504). It involves subjective and objective, intrinsic and extrinsic factors which can attribute to the decision of leaving. Some factors interplay with each other. However, little research has been done to look into the turnover or mobility of international school teachers in Hong Kong or though Yamato (2001) comments “staff movement is more frequently observed in international schools than local schools” (p.35). Thus, the results of this study may be of importance in explaining the reasons for international school teachers to teach in Hong Kong and teacher turnover situation in international schools in Hong Kong.

Relevant Theoretical and Conceptual Ideas

The literature review let us know the complexity of reasons for turnover involving multiple intrinsic and extrinsic factors to reach the decision of leaving. The turnover of international school teachers involves not just leaving a job but leaving a particular location to, maybe, home country or a third country. There are two aspects to understand including the factors motivating them to teach overseas and what factors cause them to leave again.

For the first aspect, the Push and Pull theory was used to classify the factors of causing international teachers to leave their country and factors to cause them to teach in Hong Kong, that is corresponding to my first research question, “What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?”

First, the Push and Pull theory is a reliable framework for the study of relocation and it is extensively applied in the migration studies. Second, the Push and Pull factors here are able to help identify what factors motivated the expatriate international school teachers to move in and out. Thus, the “Pull” and “Push” factors suggested in AFT (2009) were adopted in this study. They were employed both for the data collection and data analysis.

However, for the second aspect about what factors caused them to leave again, the turnover decision involves complex consideration of self, family, other non-job dimensions, and even personal perception and values as Mobley (1982) comments. Push and Pull theory cannot fully examine factors which interact in the process of making the turnover decision. Thus, Mobley’s (1982) Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover was supplemented with the Push and Pull Theory to identify the turnover factors from the perspective of expatriate teachers. In this model, there are four general classes: “external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work-related variables” (Mobley, 1982, p.78). As mentioned previously, a plenty of studies also

attempted to examine determinants of turnover. However, they focused more on only one or two variables. Ingersoll (2001) examined individual characteristics and condition of schools. Cambridge (2002) explored teacher characteristics. The studies, for instance, Odland and Ruzicka (2009), Mancuso (2010), Benson (2011) and Dos Santos (2019) investigated administrative leadership. Compared to these studies, Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover is more comprehensive to examine multiple possible causes and correlative of turnover. In the model, potentially relevant variables are identified into four classes of "external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work-related variables" (Mobley, 1982, p.78). Therefore, these four classes were included in the survey. For instance, in the Question of the online survey, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of the factors which lead them to stay or leave Hong Kong. The factors provided were based on these four classifications. However, in the interviews, the participants were asked more detail on the explanation for the factor they rated most. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed based on these four classes in the data analysis part.

Push and Pull theory

As stated previously the research about the mobility and migration of education professionals started to draw research attention (e.g. Bense, 2016; Vagi and Pivovarova, 2017). The Push and Pull theory was commonly used in migration studies (Lee, 1966; European, 2000; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010; Lillie, et al., 2013). The Lee's Migration Model (1966) is a classic model to elaborate the push and pull factors that stimulate the decision of migration in terms of the following four categories:

- "1. Factors associated with the area of origin.
2. Factors associated with the area of destination.
3. Intervening obstacles.
4. Personal factors." (Lee, 1966, p.50)

In the model, the forces of the three factors are presented in the Figure 3.1 below by using “+” and “-” signs to represent their force. For instance, “+” signs refer to the pull factors associated with the areas which hold people to stay. Conversely, “-” signs refer to the push factors in an area which lead people to leave. “0” signs mean people are indifferent to that factor. Apart from these factors, the decision of migration is made with personal factors (Lee, 1966). Thus, the decision of moving out actually involves the struggles among positive and negative factors both related to the origin country and the destination places and even personal factors.

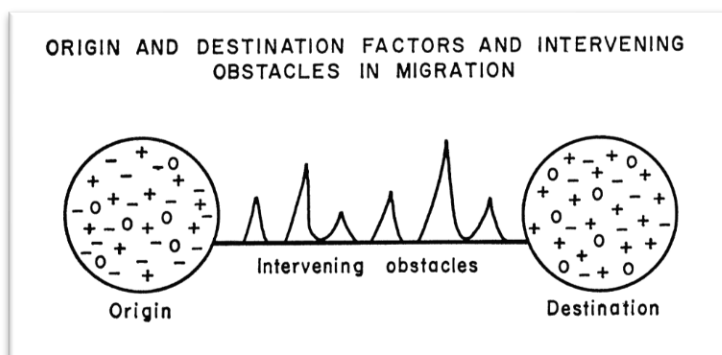


Figure 3.1: Origin and destination factors and intervening obstacles in migration (Lee, 1966:50).

The Lee’s Migration Model offered a theoretical basis to analyze the positive (pull) and negative (push) factors in relation to the original and destination places. The Theory of Push and Pull was extensively adopted by the scholars of labour migration. For instance, Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010; Lillie, et al., 2013 used it to identify “pull” and “push” factors causing people to relocate or repatriate. According to Lillie, et al. (2013), “when people move to new places looking for a job or better employment conditions, they are considered labour migrants” (p. 226). They further identify the reasons for labour migration based on the Push and Pull theory. They attributed the Push factors of labour migration are “difficulties at home which create an incentive to leave” and pull factors are “incentives to go to a new location” (Lillie, et al., 2013, p.221). Basically, they followed the explanation of Lee’s Migration Model as it is originally used to explain the factors causing the relocation.

But another study conducted by Tharenou and Caulfield (2010) adapted the Push and Pull theory and developed a new conceptual framework to explain the reasons for repatriation of some Australian professionals. It examined the influence both the “push to repatriate” and “pull to remain” from the host country and the “pull to repatriate” by the home country (p. 1011). Apart from the push and pull factors, like Lee’s model, Tharenou and Caulfield (2010) also added a personal factor “shocks to the system” (p. 1010). Here, it is worth noting that the Push and Pull theory was adapted and modified to be a new theoretical concept to evaluate the repatriation of expatriates. Push and Pull theory is still a central idea to look into the factors of host country and home country.

Among the international professionals, international teaching professionals are regarded as one of the most mobile professionals likely to move in the global education market (Manik, 2014; Bense, 2016). They may not intend to migrate originally but their move from one country to another country can be considered as a labour mobility and migration. In the report published by the European Communities (2000), the push factors for causing people to leave their home place include war, lack of economic opportunities or political persecution. On the contrary pull factors motivate people to move to a new location for a job availability at the destination, political freedom and living environment. The professionals have become highly mobile with the growth of the global labour market. For instance, in the report of Skilbeck and Connell (2003), it revealed Australian trained teachers are popular among overseas schools with English language instructions including international schools, thereby, “international recruitment drives for Australian trained teachers to work overseas” (p.23) have emerged for many years. The world has become one large employment pool for professionals. Lucrative work opportunities initiate the relocation of professionals like international teachers.

In the global labour market, the relocation of these professionals can be a vehicle to transfer skills and practices within the international education setting. In the report of AFT (2009), the idea of

push-and-pull theory was also used to explain the causes of the relocation of international teachers. "A push factor is the force driving a person to consider leaving home. A pull factor is an enticement to select another place to live or work." (AFT, 2009, p.14).

The push and pull factors of the relocation of international teachers (AFT, 2009, p.14) were identified as below:

"Push Factors

- Low compensation and benefits
- Family obligations
- Political instability
- Graft and corruption
- Poor working conditions
- Poor living conditions
- No job security
- Not enough jobs

Pull Factors

- Higher compensation and benefits
- Family ties
- More job opportunities
- More political, economic, social stability
- Better living conditions
- Better working conditions
- Professional development interests
- Desire to see the world"

This classification of Push and Pull factors from AFT (2009) was borrowed to address the first research

question “What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?” First, the Push and Pull theory is a reliable framework for the study of relocation and it is extensively applied in the migration studies. Second, the push and pull factors here are able to help identify what factors motivated the expatriate international school teachers to move in and out. Thus, the “Pull” and “Push” factors suggested in AFT (2009) were adopted in this study. They were employed both for the data collection and data analysis.

In the quantitative data, these factors were enlisted in the questions which the participants were asked to rate their importance. For instance, the participants were asked to rate the importance for the Pull factor “Low compensation and benefits in my country” when they made the decision to leave their home country” in Question 6 or rate the importance of the Push factor “salary” when they decided to teach in Hong Kong in Question 7. From the quantitative responses, the most relevant push and pull factors were examined. This is further elaborated in the Chapter 5: Findings from Quantitative Data.

For Qualitative data, the nodes/themes were developed also based on this classification of push and pull factors. Transcripts were reviewed and coded under these relevant nodes and the finding of qualitative data were then presented under the sections of “Push factors for leaving their home country” and “Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong”. This is elaborated in the Chapter 6: Findings from the Qualitative Data.

However, the Push and Pull theory cannot fully examine factors which interact in the process of making the turnover decision. As Mobley (1982) comments, a whole person needs to be considered to map out the issue of turnover because the decision of turnover is ultimately an individual behavior which involves complex decisions with the consideration of self, family, other non-job dimensions and what the individual perceives and values. Thus, in the current study, Mobley’s (1982) Model of

Causes and Correlates of Turnover is supplemented with the Push and Pull Theory to identify the factors about the decision of turnover from the perspective of expatriate teachers.

Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover

Mobley developed a remarkable conceptual model called the Model of the Turnover Process in 1977 (Mobley, 1977). This model (1977) includes three major antecedents of turnover intentions i.e. organizational commitment, job satisfaction and perceived alternative job opportunities (Wong and Li, 1995). It demonstrates how complex a dissatisfied employee comes up with the decision of leaving. In the process, the employee evaluates the current job. If the staff is dissatisfied, this leads to thoughts of quitting. It follows by evaluating the idea of searching for a new job and the plan of searching. After the actual searching, the employee compares the available employment alternatives with the present job to decide stay or leave. This model was recognized to predict turnover more accurately than other approaches (Hom, et al., 1984). However, it was also criticized for “fewer details on the likely antecedents of job satisfaction” (Lee and Mowday, 1987, p.724).

Mobley further investigated the causes of the turnover and summarized the potential variables related to turnover in the simplified Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover (Figure 3.2). In this model, determinants are elaborated in detail. They are classified into four general classes: “external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work-related variables” (Mobley, 1982, p.78). The external economy can refer to availability of alternative jobs, level of unemployment, inflation. Organization variables include the reward system, leadership. It is worth noting that Mobley classified the individual variables more specifically. The individual variables are related to turnover in two ways – non-work (external factors e.g. family matters, the change of spouse’s career and individual preferences and individual work-related factors e.g. job-related expectations, job values, commitment to work. All these variables are correlated and affect an individual during the process of making the decision of either staying or leaving.

Mobley (1982) also remarks that we cannot only focus on particular factors because the focus on any one of them may cause an “incomplete and perhaps inadequate understanding of turnover” (p. 78). Although there are variables related to external economy and organizational variables, Mobley reminds us to pay attention to the individual’s reaction or perception to these external factors. We need to consider how individuals perceive and evaluate the economy or organizational factors. From the perspective of Mobley, “turnover is ultimately an individual behavior” (p. 79).

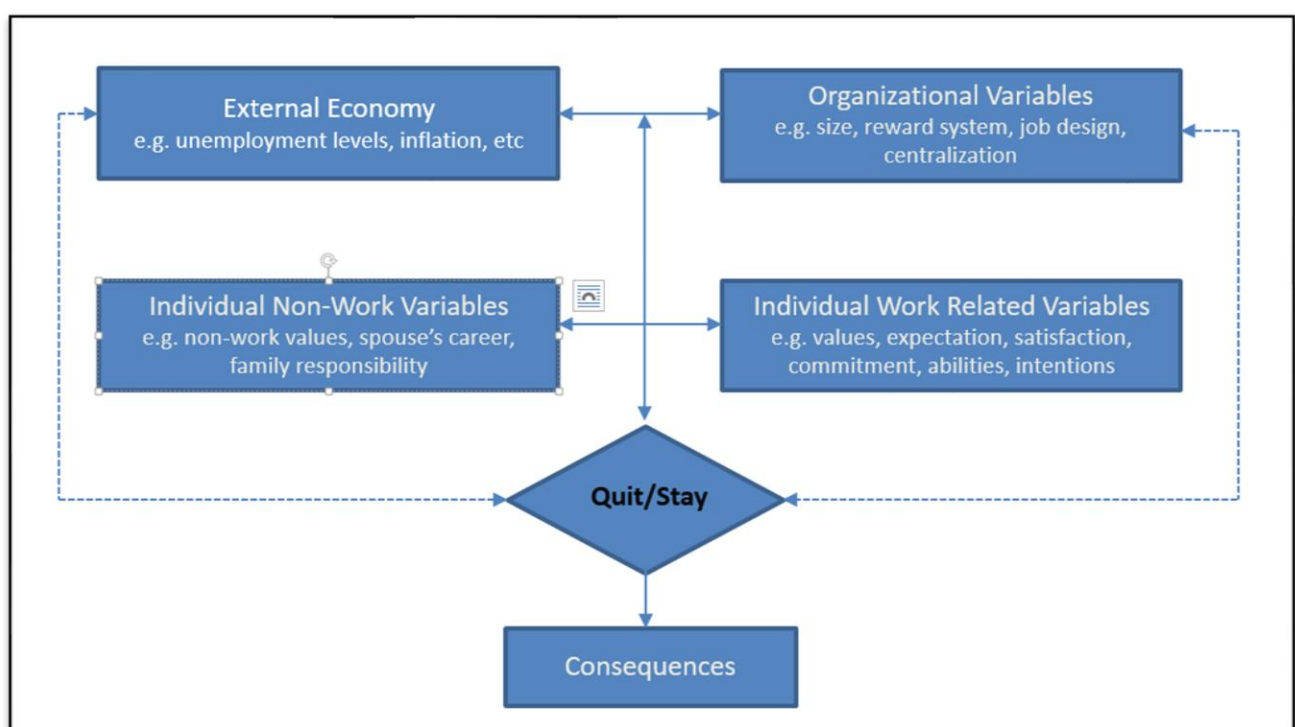


Figure 3.2: A simplified model of the causes and correlates of turnover (Mobley 1982:78)

As mentioned previously, a plenty of studies also attempt to examine determinants of turnover. However, they focus on only one or two variables. Ingersoll (2001) examines individual characteristics and condition of schools. Cambridge (2002) explored teacher characteristics. The studies, for instance, Odland and Ruzicka (2009), Mancuso (2010), Benson (2011) and Dos Santos (2019) investigated administrative leadership. Compared to these studies, Mobley’s Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover is more comprehensive to explore turnover determinants. Therefore, the Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover are used in this study to identify the

variables of teacher turnover.

Four classes of Mobley's models "external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work-related variables" (Mobley, 1982, p.78) are included in the survey. For instance, in the Question of the online survey, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of the factors which lead them to stay or leave Hong Kong. The factors provided were based on these four classifications. However, in the interviews, the participants were asked more detail on the explanation for the factor they rated most. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed based on these four classes in the data analysis part. They are elaborated in the Finding chapters in detail.

To round up, the current study explores the mobility of international school teachers and the teacher turnover from the teacher perspectives and it analyzed the issue of teacher turnover based on two theoretical frameworks. One is Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, AFT, 2009), and the other is Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (1982). Two different frameworks were employed as they focus on different perspectives. The Push and Pull theory was used to look into the factors of expatriate teachers moving in and out of Hong Kong. The Causes and Correlates of Turnover was used to examine the intrinsic and extrinsic factors which attribute to the decision of leaving from the teacher perspective.

Chapter 4: Methodology and Methods

Purpose of the Study

From the previous literature (Hayden, 2006; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Tarry, 2011), it can be found that high teacher turnover is commonplace in international schools globally. However, there is a paucity of literature about the teacher mobility or turnover of international schools in Hong Kong.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the issue of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong and to explore factors causing expatriate teachers to move in and out of Hong Kong. As presented in the previous chapter, two concepts lead the direction of this study. One is the Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, AFT 2009). This is used to identify the push and pull factors associated with the home country of the expatriates and their destination of teaching overseas, i.e. Hong Kong. In addition to the Push and Pull theory, Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover frames the factors of turnover and guides the exploration of what expatriate international school teachers consider when they decide to stay or leave in terms of external economy, organizational variables, individual non-work variables and individual work-related variables.

Methodology

In this study, mixed methods research was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was collected by an online survey followed by in-depth interviews to collect the qualitative data. As Merriam and Tisdell (2015) comment the purpose of mixed methods, a combination of quantitative research and qualitative research is to provide a better understanding of a research problem than using either research approach alone. The mixed methods research is regarded as "a rich field for the combination of data" (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p.3).

Guba and Lincoln (1994) explain a research paradigm as "a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that

deals with ultimates or first principles” (p. 107). The paradigm influences the researcher how to view the nature of the world and directs the way to explore the research questions. Conventionally, education research is classified into three paradigms: the positivist research paradigm, the interpretive research paradigm and the critical paradigm (Habermas, 1987; Bassey, 1990). The positivists believe that there is one reality that can be measured by quantitative analysis. By contrast, qualitative researchers assume “reality is constructed by individuals in light of their experiences” (Creswell, 2015, p.45). Hence there was a long debate among purists that qualitative methods should not be combined because of their incompatible epistemological underpinnings. A counterargument emerged contemporarily and “pragmatists believe that multiple paradigms can be used to address research problems” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p.26). The mixed methods research was regarded as a new paradigm or combining paradigms (Ghiara, 2020). The use of mixed methods has become a more and more popular way to “harness the strengths of both approaches, triangulate data and illuminate statistical findings” (Somekh and Lewin, 2011, p.220). It was believed to enhance the validity of the findings by triangulating different methods in the combination of method triangulation (different ways of looking at it) and data triangulation (different findings) (Silverman, 2013).

The researcher of this study also supports the idea of using ‘mixed methods’ design, using both quantitative and qualitative data. Thus, an explanatory design of mixed methods was used. It refers to “explanatory sequential design, the quantitative data are collected first; the collection of the qualitative data follows, generally with the purpose of explaining the results or a particular part of the findings in more depth” (Creswell, 2015, p.47). In this study, a quantitative online survey was conducted first. On the one hand, the survey helped identify participants for the follow-up interviews. On the other hand, the quantitative survey identified mobility and turnover factors and significance of turnover which could be analyzed statistically. Then, interviews were conducted and the qualitative data provided a richer understanding and explanation of the quantitative findings.

Actually, a qualitative research approach is the core of this study in order to generate “rich data” and “thick description” (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.16) to look into the determinants for making decisions of moving and leaving through teachers’ own interpretation and description. As Merriam and Tisdell (2015) explain, “the overall purposes of qualitative research are to achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process (rather than the outcome or product) of meaning-making, and describe how people interpret what they experience. The analysis strives for depth of understanding.” (p.16). The expectation of this paper is to know more about how international school teachers interpreted their reasons for making them move in and out of Hong Kong and how they explained the matter of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong. It is expected to have a better understanding from their own perspective and interpretation through interviews.

Research Methods

As mentioned above, this research used an explanatory design of mixed methods to collect data. As recommended by Somekh and Lewin (2011), the value of mixed methods is to “generate better understanding in many contexts than studies bounded by a single methodological tradition” (p. 260). Since there is limited research about the teacher turnover of expatriate teachers in the international school setting, multiple research methods allow better understanding of the issue in more contexts. This study began by a quantitative survey that was an online survey (see the Appendix 3). It was sent to international teachers who are working or worked previously in international schools in Hong Kong through different ways of distribution. Somekh and Lewin (2011) suggested there should be at least 100 cases for major sub-groups and between 20 and 50 for minor sub-groups for surveys. The population of international school teachers is minor among the teachers in Hong Kong. Though Cohen, et al. (2010) recommend thirty is the minimum number of cases for statistical analysis, in consideration that the larger the sample size the smaller the error will be, this study targeted around 100 respondents at the planning stage. When the cut-off time was due based on the research

scheduled time, the survey was answered by 94 participants finally. The purpose of the survey was to explore Push and Pull factors for causing expatriate teachers to work abroad and choose to work in Hong Kong and the turnover factors which they considered leaving and how they interpreted the teacher turnover rate.

The quantitative survey provided some ideas of the Push and Pull factors and turnover factors presented in descriptive statistics. But it cannot sketch a clear picture of how respondents interpreted those factors. For example, teachers may have different interpretations of what “safety of environment” means. Some may regard that it is related to the rate of crimes but it can also be interpreted as the relation to the threat to health caused by food safety or air quality. Thus, the qualitative method is used to triangulate the findings and to reveal the meanings of the factors from the perspective of participants. Thoughts and interpretation of teacher mobility and their turnover were explored by semi-structured interviews which allow “participants to reflect on their experiences in a thoughtful manner” and “contextualize the individual’s account” (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.46).

Ethical Issues

The major ethical issues for this study are informed consents and participants’ confidentiality. Although participants are adults, the topic regarding teacher turnover is still a sensitive topic for the participants especially those if they left due to an unpleasant or involuntary reason. The first consideration was how to ensure the participants know what rights they can have throughout the study. The second major concern was how to maintain a strict confidentiality throughout the study also.

Regarding information given to participants, it was considered what possible ways to inform the participants their rights and what should be included. For the survey, a cover letter (Appendix 2) was used to introduce the research and the rights of participants. It starts by a self-introduction of

the researcher, the purpose of the study and the topic related to teacher turnover to give a general idea to the participants and they will not feel shocked when they are asked about the satisfaction and reasons for leaving. In the message it also stresses the participation is on a voluntary basis and the strictest confidentiality can be maintained throughout this study. In order to let the participants feel comfortable, it is promised not to disclose their real names or identify their schools associated with their real identity by reporting the data in descriptive or aggregate form without identification of individuals or schools. They are encouraged to give full responses, however, if they don't feel comfortable, they are free not to answer.

Basically, same confidentiality and informed consent items are assured again in the Consent for Participation in Interview Research (Appendix 5). The participants are also assured their rights to refuse to answer and how to maintain the confidentiality as possible for data management and storage. In the consent form, it makes it clear that there is no direct benefit to the participants apart from the research contribution but the contact with the researcher if they have questions about the research.

To enhance the thoughts of the ethical concerns, before collecting the data, an ethical review was conducted with a fellow researcher. First, the researcher presented the outline of the study to him including the purpose, research questions, research methods, the subjects of the study and theoretical frameworks the study would be. Then, we discussed what possible ethical concerns may be involved in the study based on the GSoE's process required by the University of Bristol. The complete ideas were presented in the GSoE's Ethic Form (Appendix 1) which was submitted and approved before the start of the data collection.

Subjects of the study

The first question in the survey is a screening question, "Are/Were you a teacher at an international

school currently or in the past?”. It was asked to identify the eligibility of respondents. The subjects of this study are expatriate international school teachers. They could be current or past teachers. They were overseas-hired and worked in Hong Kong under the employment visa at the beginning. After 7 consecutive years of residency, they are eligible to become permanent Hong Kong residents. The expatriate teachers who are employment visa holders usually stay temporarily in Hong Kong. However, in this study, there is no intention to limit the subjects to the employment visa holders only. It is still valuable to know if permanent expatriate international school teachers consider leaving.

Source of Data and Samples

This research targeted a particular group - expatriate international school teachers in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, apart from the number of international schools in Hong Kong, there are no official statistics about the number of international school teachers in Hong Kong (EDB, 2019a) as most of the international schools are private and highly independent institutions in nature. Thus, collecting data from international school teachers about teacher turnover is probably sensitive and it is not easy to access this community without the connection especially for those who left Hong Kong. In consideration of survey return rate, feasibility and cost of time, convenience sampling and a snowball sampling were used initially at the beginning of data collection.

Convenient samples are participants that the researcher has easy access to (Somekh and Lewin, 2011). They can be reached through the personal networks (Seale, 2012). Snowball sampling is to ask participants to recommend those who can take part (Patton, 2002). This strategy starts by locating a few key participants and they are then asked to refer to other participants. “By asking a number of people who else to talk with, the snowball gets bigger and bigger as you accumulate new information-rich cases” (Patton, 2002, p.298). This study’s researcher has been working in an international school for almost 10 years and knows a group of expatriate teachers in the school.

Some of them have left and changed to teach in other international schools in Hong Kong. The researcher contacted these past colleagues and asked them to help with contacting their teaching friends. However, this snowball sampling did not work well. Most of these colleagues agreed to fill out the survey but only a few of them further referred to other participants. The researcher contacted 26 friends from May to July in 2017, some of them were her past expatriate colleagues and their friends working in other international schools. However, up to July 2017, only 27 respondents returned the survey.

So, the researcher adjusted her strategy. She tried to reach expatriate teachers directly by sending emails (Appendix 2) to their school email accounts found in the school websites as it was thought to be a relatively labour intensive way to reach expatriate teachers at low cost. 10 to 15 random samples from each school were selected. In total, 1087 emails were sent to 10 different international schools. Probably, unsolicited emails were automatically labelled as spam (Taylor-Powell, 2002). As Saleh and Bista (2017) explain, the use of spamming software made the response rate of email surveys lower than mail or phone surveys. The response rate was unexpectedly very low and there were only 6 more respondents.

Due to a great challenge in recruiting expatriate teachers, the source of the subjects extended from access to past colleagues to emailing the survey to international school teachers to posts on Facebook groups. To extend the chance of reaching the target group, the researcher started to post the survey invitation through expatriate community social networking including Facebook groups like Expat Hong Kong, EFL teachers of Hong Kong, International School Teachers Association. An encouraging number of responses was received after the Facebook posts were published in those groups. Some respondents further forwarded the survey link to their colleagues or teaching friends. Finally, before the cut-off time, the survey was completed by 94 respondents.

Though the number of respondents was a little smaller than the targeted sample size, 100, 94 cases were still close to the targeted. 20 to 50 cases were usually required for the minor sub-groups for survey (Somekh and Lewin, 2011). Thus 94 cases were larger than the required. Additionally, the sample size depends on the research goals (Seale, 2012). As discussed previously, the core value of this study was to better understand of teacher mobility and turnover from teacher perspectives. Among these 94 respondents, more than half, 57 respondents agreed to participate in interviews. It attained the first purpose of the mixed methods was to recruit the interview participants by the survey. Second, this study intended to use the quantitative survey to identify mobility and turnover factors and significance of turnover issues and analyze these statistically. Quantitative data from 94 respondents was sufficient to give descriptive statistics and their explanations were further explored from the qualitative findings.

Instrument - survey

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, AFT, 2009) and the Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover (Mobley, 1982) provided grounds for collecting the data and to strive for ensuring the validity of the data collection instrument. These two models framed the data collection and analysis. For the quantitative data, the data were collected from an online survey and the design of the survey was based on three research questions.

The survey consists of 20 questions in 5 pages. They include both closed questions and open-ended questions. The open-ended question is “the one where the range of possible answers is not suggested in the question and which respondents are expected to answer in their own words” (Brace, 2004, p.55). On the contrary, “there is a predictable and small set of answers to a closed question that the respondent can give” (Brace, 2004, p.56). The use of closed or open questions depends what the expected answers would be collected. For instance, the survey started by a screening question, “Are/Were you a teacher at an international school currently or in the past?” that is a closed question

because a straightforward answer “yes” or “no” was expected. For some questions, closed questions are used because it is expected to see the “possible response from which the respondents” (Brace, 2004, p. 56). There are some closed questions in 5 Likert scales to ask the opinion on the significance of the given factors adapted from Push and Pull theory and Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover. For instance, the respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance for the push factor “Low compensation and benefits” played in their decision to leave home. These Likert scale responses can be easily managed by coding and being measured statistically. On the other hand, the open-ended question was asked to allow the respondents to give a free response (Somekh and Lewin, 2011), for instance, they were asked to suggest other reasons to cause them to leave home. This allows the respondents the opportunity to suggest factors out of the given ones. However, answers with detail were more expected to be collected by follow-up interviews rather than by the survey. Somekh and Lewin (2011) suggest “there should not be too many open-ended questions as they are more time-consuming to complete” (p. 225). Thus, comparatively, most of the questions in this study are closed questions in order to collect the responses toward the given mobility and turnover factors. Also, the responses which were pre-coded can be easily recorded and ready for analysis. It is “easy to administer and cheap to process” (Brace, 2004, p.56). Additionally, the closed questions are easy for the respondents to fill out and do not take up too much time to complete and this hopefully ensures that the respondents’ interest can be maintained (Brace, 2004).

There are 3 sections in the survey. They are “Qualifications and Experiences”, “Your Opinions” and “Personal Details”. The purpose of the Section One Qualifications and Experiences is to make sure the subjects are target respondents for this study. Thus, the first question is “Are/Were you a teacher at an international school currently or in the past?” to identify if the respondents are eligible. If the response is “no”, the participant will be asked to end the survey and a message will indicate “Thank you for taking part in the survey, your responses for the following questions are not no longer required”

and so they will not waste time to continue. The target respondents are then asked about their teaching background like their teaching position, teaching grade level and how long they have worked in Hong Kong and how many schools they have worked in Hong Kong from questions 2 to 5. All these questions are for collecting data about the teaching experiences.

The questions of Section Two: Your opinions are to address the research questions directly. Questions 6 and 7 look for the answers for the first research questions - What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong? In these two questions most of the “Pull” and “Push” factors suggested in AFT (2009) are adopted. In the report of AFT, the push factors include:

- “Low compensation and benefits
- Family obligations
- Political instability
- Graft and corruption
- Poor working conditions
- Poor living conditions
- No job security
- Not enough jobs” (AFT, 2009, p.14)

Among these factors, the “Graft and Corruption” was replaced by a more general factor “safety environment”. Graft refers to a political corruption where a politician uses his/her authority to receive personal gain. This was a very specific factor and so was replaced by a more general term “safety environment” to cover more possible factors. The factor “Poor living conditions” was rephrased to “Improvement in living conditions” because most of the expatriate teachers come from high income western countries. The factor “No job security” is a very extreme case and so it is rephrased to “less job security” and “not enough jobs” was changed to “look for better job

opportunities as the situation of “not enough jobs” may not apply for the international teaching professionals and it sounds negative for their reason of teaching abroad due to “not enough jobs”.

Thus, in Question 6, the participants are asked to indicate the level of importance for the following factors from the range of “Not at all important” to “Extremely Important” in 5 Likert scales.

- a. Low compensation and benefits in my country
- b. Family obligations
- c. Political instability
- d. Safety environment
- e. Poor working conditions
- f. Improvement in living conditions
- g. Less job security
- h. Look for better job opportunities

A Likert scale “provides a range of response to a given question or statement” (Cohen, et al., 2010, p. 253) and it is used to measure respondent’s attitude by measuring the extent to which they regard if it is important or not important for the given push factors. The Likert Scale questions are used because it is easy to draw conclusions in terms of frequencies, correlations and other forms of quantitative analysis. Additionally, the respondents are not required to express an either-or opinion because they are allowed to be neutral. Though there are limited options offered (Gee, 2017), a true attitude may not be measured as “we have no check on whether the respondents are telling the truth” (Cohen, et al., 2010, p.254). But this limitation can be overcome by the use of additional qualitative methods. A better understanding can be sought through the follow-up interviews. Additionally, a follow-up open-question allows respondents to give their own reasons. The purpose of this open-ended question is to allow the possible answers not included in the Question 7 (Brace, 2004).

Similarly, in Question 7, the following “pull” factors identified in the AFT (2009) are included:

- “Higher compensation and benefits
- Family ties
- More job opportunities
- More political, economic, social stability
- Better living conditions
- Better working conditions
- Professional development interests
- Desire to see the world” (AFT, 2009, p.14)

In addition to these factors, “Salary” and “Desire to work and live in different cultures” mentioned in the International Teacher Mobility Survey (Mancuso, 2010), the acquisition of intercultural competences asserted by Goetz, et al. (2011) for the reason of international mobility are also included. For the pull factors “More political, economic, social stability”, the factor is further split into “Political stability” and “More economic and social stability”. Respondents are asked to indicate how they regard the importance of each of these “pull” factors in 5-point Likert Scales for the following factors. It is followed by an open-ended question which asks the respondents to give the reasons causing them teaching in Hong Kong

- a. Salary (Mancuso, 2010)
- b. Higher compensation and benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)
- c. Family ties
- d. More job opportunities
- e. Political stability
- f. More economic, social stability
- g. Better living conditions
- h. Better working conditions

- i. Professional development interests
- j. Desire to work and live in different cultures (Mancuso, 2010)
- k. Intercultural experience (Goetz, et al., 2011)

For Question 8, the respondents are asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with a particular statement about their satisfaction with working in Hong Kong, their retention intention and how they think if teacher turnover is high in international schools and at their school. It is expected to get more idea about the seriousness of teacher turnover in international schools from their experiences.

Question 9 is corresponding to the second research question - What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong? The respondents are asked to indicate the level of importance for each of the given turnover factors, which may play in their leaving decision.

Though the given turnover factors in this question were devised from a huge range of sources, they were mainly adapted from the survey called International Teacher Mobility Survey by Mancuso (2010). The turnover factors found in other studies (e.g. Cambridge 2002; Stirzaker, 2004; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Benson, 2011; Sieling, 2012) were referred also to support the validity of these factors chosen. Mancuso's International Teacher Mobility Survey (ITMS) was a modified version of the SASS and TFS. Those two instruments were regarded with high validity and reliability based on a large pool of respondents for looking into the teacher mobility in the U.S and these instruments were designed by a team composed of experts in the fields of research and education (Mancuso, 2010). Mancuso modified them by eliminating items concerning U.S. demographic data and questions related to U.S. based teaching assignment but adjusted to the international school setting. Mancuso claimed the same validity of his adapted version because "the overall structure of the questionnaire was not altered" (Mancuso, 2010, p.42). These valid factors may enhance the validity of this study because

the context of Mancuso's study is also related to turnover of international school teachers.

The factors of teacher turnover are enlisted in the survey based on the four classifications "external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work related variables" (Mobley, 1982, p.78) presented in the Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover.

External economy

- Job availability (Mancuso, 2010)

Organizational variables

- Salary (Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012)
- Benefits e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax) (Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012 Ingersoll, 2001)
- Opportunities for professional development (Mancuso, 2010; Cambridge 2002)
- Opportunities for promotion (Mancuso, 2010)
- Autonomy or control over your own work (Mancuso, 2010; Ingersoll, 2001)
- Working conditions (Mancuso, 2010) e.g. facilities, classroom resources, teaching assignments)
- Recognition and support from administration (Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001)
- Administrative leadership (Black and Armstrong, 1995; Ingersoll, 2001; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Mancuso, 2010; Benson, 2011)

Individual non-work variables

- Safety of environment (Mancuso, 2010)
- Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration (Mancuso, 2010)
- Degree of Cultural adjustment (Mancuso, 2010)
- Sense of personal accomplishment (Mancuso, 2010)

- Family matters (Mobley, 1982; Cambridge 2002)
- Age (Ingersoll, 2001; Mancuso, 2010)
- Cost of living and living condition (Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Benson, 2011)
- Challenges of culture shock (Joslin, 2002; Stirzaker, 2004)

Individual work-related variables

- Social relationships with colleagues (Mancuso, 2010)
- Teacher input in decision making (Sieling, 2012)
- Student discipline (Sieling, 2012)
- Ability to balance personal life and work (Mancuso, 2010)
- Workload (Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012)
- Job satisfaction (Mobley 1982; Naumann, 1992; Ingersoll, 2001)
- Commitment to work (Naumann, 1992)

Among these factors, the respondents are asked to indicate the most important reason for them to determine their decision of retention or turnover in Question 10. As mentioned in the methodology section, it is expected to sort out the most important reason in a statistical sense and it can provide a focus for exploring reasons for teacher turnover in the interviews. Apart from the factors mentioned above, the respondents are given a chance to give their own turnover factor in Question 11. Though factors given in Question 10 were devised from a huge range of sources, the open-ended question allows an individualized input and it may come up with some unique factor related to the international school setting in Hong Kong but not discovered in other research.

The last section of the survey is to collect demographic data including age, gender, citizenship, marital status, number of children, permanent Hong Kong citizenship, expatriate contract, living in Hong Kong or moving to another destination and name of serving school. It is important to collect the

demographic data as it may be correlated to their mobility or turnover (Cambridge, 2002). However, demographic data are more personal and Braun and Clarke (2013) advise not to put them at the beginning to avoid it seeming threatening or intrusive to the respondents. Thus, they are placed at the end of the survey. At the end of the survey, the respondents are also asked if they are able to participate in the interview.

Brace (2004) comments on the importance of clarity of questions within the questionnaire to avoid problems with understanding, stating, “but if those questions are the wrong questions, poorly phrased, or in the wrong order, the answers obtained may be worse than meaningless: they may be misleading” (p.1). They could include ambiguity in the questions and failure of the respondents to understand the questions. To enhance the reliability of the questions, a pilot was done with an expatriate international school teacher. As suggested by Bisits Bullen (2016), he completed the survey and thought out loud about any questions that came into his mind and how he interpreted the questions. The questions were justified in consideration of his suggestions. For instance, the original first was “Are/Were you a teacher at an international school in Hong Kong”. He commented it was not clear enough to indicate if they are current staff. So “currently or in the past” was added at the end of question and it was rephrased to “Are/Were you a teacher at an international school in Hong Kong currently or in the past”. Another example was the change of terminology. He commented the term “acquisition of intercultural competence” was not clear enough and hard to comprehend how it was related to the reasons for choosing Hong Kong as their working destination. So, a more direct expression “Intercultural experience” was used to replace it. His comments helped the researcher to modify the survey on the clarity of wordings and layouts.

Data Collection

As planned initially, emailing was used to distribute and collect the survey. Compared to the postal contact, it saved both postal cost and time as the invitation was sent to targeted participants instantly.

Sending an invitation by email was less threatening compared to a personal contact and the participants may feel more comfortable to receive the survey by email. For snowball sampling, it was easily referred to further participants by email and this may encourage them to pass on to others.

In consideration of user friendly and common use of online spreadsheet from Google, an invitation letter (Appendix 2) was sent via email and it contained a link to an online survey which was built in a Google Form (Appendix 3). Google Forms are a free online tool and participants can fill out the survey via web browser or mobile device (Agarwal, 2014) and it is one of the popular online tools for surveys (Writtenhouse, 2018). Thus, it is a familiar format for the target group, international school teachers, since Google apps are also commonly used in the education sector. Due to its user-friendly feature, the researcher created the Google Forms easily with a wide range of question types such as checkboxes, multiple choice questions, open questions and scales. The responses can be automatically collected in an Excel spreadsheet in an organized form (Agarwal, 2014). After creating the Google Forms, it was sent by email to the target group, present or past international school teachers in Hong Kong. As stated previously, the researcher started to send to her past colleagues by email and they were also asked to forward the invitation email to their international school teaching friends. The responses were recorded in the Excel spreadsheet.

However, this snowball sampling did not work well. From May to July in 2017, only 26 respondents answered the survey but most of them were the past colleagues of the researcher and only very few respondents were their referrals. The researcher tried to extend the scope of targets by sending emails to different international school teachers based on the email contacts found in their school websites. However, just six responses were received after sending out 1087 emails. To contact the targets by sending emails seemed to not be working without any personal connection. The cost of sending emails was low but it was easily overlooked as unsolicited emails were automatically labelled as spam (Taylor-Powell, 2002). As Saleh and Bista (2017) explained, the use of spamming software

made the response rate of email surveys lower than mail or phone surveys.

The recruitment then extended to social networking groups. As Kosinski, et al. (2016) commented Facebook has been largely overlooked for its potential as a research tool and they assert the power of Facebook to access the potential participants. Ramo and Prochaska (2012) comment that Facebook is a cost-effective and useful way to recruit young adults research respondents. The features of Facebook including “tag” and “share” can easily be forwarded to their friends to join a study. Hence, an invitation message was posted in the Facebook groups like Expat Hong Kong, EFL teachers of Hong Kong, International School Teachers Association. These groups were chosen based on the possibility of the access to the targets – expatriate international school teachers. Some groups are closed groups limited to teachers only. Since the researcher is living on an outlying island in Hong Kong, a group of expatriates like living on this Island. So, the researcher recruited also in their Facebook group called Lamma Island Residents and Ex-Residents.

After the message was posted on different Facebook groups, there was a significant rise in the number of responses. Up to the cut-off date set by the researcher, a total number of 94 respondents answered the study. Among these 94 respondents, more than half, 57 respondents in total agreed to participate in further interviews.

Interviews

In this study, a quantitative survey explored the reasons for expatriate teachers to teach in Hong Kong and their retention factors. However, the survey would not give more understanding of the details about their perception about teacher turnover in international schools. The value of qualitative data is to listen to a personal interpretation and hear the explanations of the factors in person (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Thus, semi-structured interviews were conducted in different periods of time from July 2017 to February 2018. The process of interviews was audio-recorded under the

consent of the interviewees. A set of interview guiding questions was asked (Appendix 5).

In total, 19 interviews were conducted between July 2017 and February 2018. The participants were chosen from the responses of the survey. In the survey, the participants were invited to participate in the interviews. Though 57 participants (60.6%) chose “yes” for the interviews, 5 of them did not provide the contact information and 16 of them came from the same school. Due to the time constraint, the researcher tried to contact 22 participants from a variety of schools. It is intended to select a variety of schools because the study about international schools in Hong Kong is limited. It is valuable to know or understand the turnover situation in different schools and hear different experiences with different school contexts. Another consideration was the availability to arrange the interviews. Actually 3 selected participants who left Hong Kong already agreed to do the interviews in the survey. However, 2 of them did not respond to the follow up emails anymore. One agreed to do the Skype interview. At the agreed time, she did not respond to the Skype message. It seems they changed their mind about doing the interview.

Finally, 19 participants were interviewed by different formats to enhance the accessibility (Braun and Clarke, 2013). 15 participants were interviewed in person. 2 participants were interviewed over the telephone because they were unable to make a face-to-face interview after work or during the weekends since they need to take care of young children at home. For those who moved overseas already, their interviews were conducted by phone or Skype. One participant who moved to Korea was interviewed virtually by Skype and the other one who moved to Switzerland was interviewed by phone as she did not have the Skype account.

As stated in the previous Ethics part, a written Consent Form (Appendix 4) was granted from each participant before the interview. It was sent along with the guided questions of the interviews to the participants before the interviews. For those who were interviewed by phone or Skype, they were

asked to return before the interview. For face-to-face interview participants, their consent form was collected before the start of the interview. To ensure the participants understood their rights, before the interview conversations started, the researcher briefly introduced the Consent Form again and explained the procedure of the interviews and the request for recording. They were also reminded of some possible follow-up questions which may be asked but they had the right to refuse to answer if they felt not comfortable.

The list of pre-set questions was used to guide the flow of interviews. The questions corresponded to the research questions. The questions were about the reasons why they were away from their home country and moved to teach/work in Hong Kong and what they considered about staying or moving out of Hong Kong. As mentioned previously, the participants have previewed the guided questions before the interviews and so they had some ideas about what they were asked. However, the researcher did not follow exact wordings and sequences to foster flexibility for interviewees. For instance, when the researcher interviewed her colleagues, she did not ask them about the demographic questions again to make the flow of conversations more natural and flexible (Braun and Clarke, 2013). The most important thing for the research was to keep the conversations moving and ensure what could be found out from the interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to allow participants to talk more about the reasons for their mobility from their own perception and their decision for retention and their view on teacher turnover in the international schools. Clarification was made in the interview process (Cohen, et al, 2010). For instance, one of the participants said he did not leave his home country when the researcher asked “What factors caused you to leave your home country to teach?” and so an explanation was given to him and he noted it means he is away from his home country to work overseas. Though guided questions directed the flow of the interviews, based on their responses, the researcher asked the follow-up questions in order to reveal their pertinent insights. For instance, a participant mentioned that a better package was offered in Hong Kong and thus she chose to teach in Hong Kong. She was then asked to explain what included

in the package and what she was concerned most about. During the process, more time was given for the respondents to collect their thoughts and consider their answers (Silverman, 2013).

Along the interviews, note-taking was made to record and research journals were made after the interviews. They recorded the setting of the interview, anything special from the observation or insights in the process of interviews. The sample of research journals is included in the Appendix 6. Braun and Clarke (2013) supported the use of research journals to enrich the reflection from the interviews. Each interview was audio-recorded by iPhone recorder and the audio records were transcribed into written documents.

All of the interviewees were really eager to talk and tell. None of them raised concerns for the questions the researcher asked. However, some interview locations might not be so ideal. 9 interviews were conducted in the public area like coffee shops or canteens. The surrounding was too noisy. It influenced the quality of recording and made it hard to listen when the conversations were transcribed. But overall interviews went actually very smoothly.

Data Analysis

For Quantitative data

94 international school teachers answered the online survey built in a Google Form. The responses were automatically collected in an Excel spreadsheet in an organized form (Agarwal, 2014). Thus, descriptive statistics of all questionnaire responses were computed by the Excel program. Then, data were coded. For instance, for closed questions, male 1, female 2; Prefer not to say. For those questions to measure respondents' attitude in Likert scales, a code number was assigned to each response, 1 for Not at all important, 2 for Slight important, 3 for Somewhat important, 4 for Very important and 5 for Extremely important. For open-ended questions, a coding frame was devised. It followed the thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) through six phrases: "familiarization with

data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.97). For example, in the second part of Question 6 which is an open-ended question, participants were asked to give other reasons not included in the push factors to cause them leaving their home country. After reviewing all responses, initial codes were assigned to defined themes like 1 for Opportunities to travel and adventure, 2 for Student loans, 3 for Spouse’s job, etc. Based on the classification of code themes, a frequency tally, mean, percentage or standard deviation of the range of responses were produced through the Excel formulas (Cohen, et al, 2010, p.265). Descriptive statistics were calculated and the results were presented in tables or descriptions or charts (see Figure 4.1 as an example).

Coding	Themes	Frequency	Percentage
1	Opportunities to travel and adventure	27	38.03%
2	Student loans	3	4.23%
3	Spouse's job	4	5.63%
4	Life experience	4	5.63%
5	Experience New Culture	9	12.68%
6	Family issue	1	1.41%
7	Salary	3	4.23%
8	Climate	3	4.23%
9	Funding	1	1.41%
10	professional development	8	11.27%
11	political situation	2	2.82%
12	job opportunities	4	5.63%
13	workload	1	1.41%
14	relationship	1	1.41%
		71	100.00%

Figure 4.1: Code themes for Question 6 Part 2 of the survey about other reasons given by the participant for the reason of leaving their home country to work overseas.

For qualitative data

After the interviews, audio-recorded data were transcribed and analyzed by the thematic analysis also (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to review the recorded data and group the ideas or contents. A data analysis software called NVivo was used to help organize the data. Transcripts, audio records and

interview memo then were uploaded into the program.

Transcripts were reviewed and coded under the relevant nodes. In the program, the term “node” is used instead of “code”. Before coding, the researcher went through the transcripts while listening to the audio recording line by line to recall the memory of the content and the feeling of the speakers. Cohen, et al, (2010) explain “coding is the ascription of a category label to a piece of data, with the category label either decided in advance or in response to the data that have been collected” (p. 283). Basically, nodes/themes were created and classified based on two theoretical frameworks – Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, AFT 2009) and Mobley’s Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (Mobley, 1982) in advance. For instance, the previous stated Push Factors for Leaving their Home Country like:

- a. Low compensation and benefits in my country
- b. Family obligations
- c. Political instability
- d. Safety environment
- e. Poor working conditions
- f. Improvement in living conditions
- g. Less job security
- h. Look for better job opportunities

They were used as the pre-assigned node structure (see Figure 4.2). The relevant contents in the transcript were recorded corresponding to the pre-set nodes. On the nodes page, the number of sources and references are indicated for the specific nodes. However, from the data sources, other factors out of the pre-set nodes emerged. For example, some participants mentioned they left their home due to their spouse changing their job. So the node “Job change of the spouse or partner” was added as a sub-node under the node “Push Factor Family Obligation”. The program allows to

organize the nodes in a hierarchy. This helps “refine the thoughts and draw connections between themes” (QSR International, 2017, p.26).

Nodes

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	
Period of stays		16	26	2/10/2018 4:47 PM	RWONG
Teacher Turnover		13	26	1/21/2018 9:45 PM	RWONG
Struggling time to make decision		13	20	2/10/2018 8:44 PM	RWONG
Satisfaction with teaching in Hong Kong		12	15	1/21/2018 9:43 PM	RWONG
Pull Factors for Moving to Hong Kong		7	8	1/21/2018 9:25 PM	RWONG
Planning to Stay and Teach in Hong Kong		5	8	1/21/2018 9:44 PM	RWONG
Push Factors for Leaving their Home Country		0	0	1/21/2018 9:21 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Look for Better Job Opportunities		8	10	1/21/2018 9:30 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Family Obligation		4	4	1/21/2018 9:26 PM	RWONG
Job change of the spouse or partner		1	2	2/21/2018 10:41 AM	RWONG
Push Factor_Poor Working Conditions		4	6	1/21/2018 9:29 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Less Job Security		4	5	1/21/2018 9:29 PM	RWONG
Pay off debts		2	3	2/20/2018 6:26 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Safety Environment		1	1	1/21/2018 9:27 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Poor living Condition		1	1	1/21/2018 9:28 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Low compensation and benefits		0	0	1/21/2018 9:26 PM	RWONG
Push Factor_Political Instability		0	0	1/21/2018 9:27 PM	RWONG
Factors of Teacher Turnover		0	0	1/21/2018 9:51 PM	RWONG
Questionnaire Survey All Responses		0	0	2/24/2018 12:34 PM	RWONG

Figure 4.2: Nodes linked with Sources and References

Its workplace provides easy access to all these materials (see Figure 4.3). On the platform, it is easy to view what has been coded. As Cohen et al. (2010) suggest, the source needs to be read and re-coded on a second reading and even third reading sometimes to see if any contents might be coded at multiple nodes.

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface. The main window displays a transcript of an interview with a teacher. The transcript is organized into segments, each highlighted in a different color to represent different nodes. The left sidebar shows the 'Nodes' list, which includes nodes like 'Period of stays', 'Teacher Turnover', 'Struggling time to make decision', 'Satisfaction with teaching in Hong Kong', 'Pull Factors for Moving to Hong Kong', 'Planning to Stay and Teach in Hong Kong', 'Push Factors for Leaving their Home Country', 'Push Factor_Look for Better Job Opportunities', 'Push Factor_Family Obligation', 'Job change of the spouse or partner', 'Push Factor_Poor Working Conditions', 'Push Factor_Less Job Security', 'Pay off debts', 'Push Factor_Safety Environment', 'Push Factor_Poor living Condition', 'Push Factor_Low compensation and benefits', 'Push Factor_Political Instability', 'Factors of Teacher Turnover', and 'Questionnaire Survey All Responses'. The top menu bar includes options like 'Home', 'Create', 'Data', 'Analyze', 'Query', 'Explore', 'Layout', 'View', and 'Media'. The transcript text includes discussions about the teacher's experience in Hong Kong, their family, and their plans to move to Australia.

Figure 4.3: Transcripts highlighted with the specific nodes in the program

Transcripts were reviewed and coded under the relevant nodes. The program helps to gather the related references in one place under a specific node. So, the relevant references of a particular node could be explored easily. Figure 4.4 below shows four relevant references under the node “Push Factor Family Obligation”. It also links with the sources and the name of the files. Since the participant names were used as the filenames and thus the researcher can track which participants have said that content easily.

Name	Sources	References
Factors of Teacher Turn	0	0
Period of stays	16	26
Planning to Stay and Te	5	8
Pull Factors for Moving	7	8
Push Factors for Leavin	0	0
Pay off debts	2	3
Push Factor_Family	4	4
Job change of t	1	2
Push Factor_Less Jo	4	5
Push Factor_Look f	8	10
Push Factor_Low co	0	0
Push Factor_Politica	0	0
Push Factor_Poor li	1	1
Push Factor_Poor W	4	6
Push Factor_Safety	1	1
Questionnaire Survey A	0	0
Satisfaction with teachin	12	15
Struggling time to mak	13	20
Teacher Turnover	13	26

Push Factor_Family Obligation

<Internals\Interviews\Recording 13 Interview with Sandra> - 5 1 reference coded [2.81% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.81% Coverage

My husband got a job here and we'd both just finished at university. So when we came, I'd finished my teaching course and I had a job to go to, but then we moved to Hong Kong. So I didn't have a job, specifically, to come to. But I started looking as soon as I got here

<Internals\Interviews\Recording 15 Interview with Katie> - 5 1 reference coded [2.83% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 2.83% Coverage

So I was married and then I got divorced. And I've always wanted to work in a different country, but my husband then didn't want to. So when I became single again, there was no reason not to. So I applied for quite a lot of different jobs, and this is just the one that I happened to be successful in getting.

<Internals\Interviews\Recording 6 Interview with Sachi> - 5 1 reference coded [6.00% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 6.00% Coverage

I moved out because of my husband's job. So I left India, and then we moved to Dubai. I lived there for three years. I had my second daughter over there. And then from there, we came to Hong Kong

<Internals\Interviews\Recording 8 Interview with Dabria> - 5 1 reference coded [1.36% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.36% Coverage

my parents moved here in Hong Kong many, many years ago. So I just came with them, with my parents

Figure 4.4: Open a node to explore the relevant references

Then the finding of qualitative data were organized into headings of:

- Push factors for leaving their home country
- Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong
- Period of stays in Hong Kong
- Factors of teacher turnover – Individual non-work variables
- Factors of teacher turnover – external economy
- Factors of teacher turnover – organization variables
- Factors of teacher turnover – Individual work related variables
- Issue of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong

- Satisfaction with teaching in Hong Kong

Under the frameworks, data were analyzed and interpreted into descriptive texts across the themes.

Findings were triangulated with the data of the online survey. The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data were presented in the next two chapters.

Chapter 5: Findings from Quantitative Data

This research aims at identifying the significance of the issue of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong and exploring factors which cause expatriate teachers to move in and out of Hong Kong. This chapter provides a report of findings from the quantitative data with responses from 94 international school teachers. It begins with findings from the profile of respondents who participated in the study and then proceeds to report the quantitative findings in terms of the three research questions.

Participants' profiles

This section provides an elaborate description of the profiles of the teacher respondents to the questionnaire. It includes gender, age, marital status, nationalities, Hong Kong citizenship status, the number of teaching years in Hong Kong, and the teaching level and the name of their serving international schools. All these data are found from Section One of the questionnaire: Qualification and Experience and the Section Three: Personal Details. The questionnaire was answered by 94 participants and 19 of them participated in the follow-up interviews. Descriptive statistics of all questionnaire respondents were computed by the Excel program. The profiles of the interview participants are presented in the next Chapter.

Since the target of this study is expatriate international school teachers, the first criteria of the survey is a person who is an expatriate teacher teaching at an international school in Hong Kong currently or in the past. Among 94 respondents, only one person said “no” to the question but she indicated her position as a Head Teacher in one of the international schools in Hong Kong in the survey so her responses were still counted as valid data.

Among these 94 respondents in the survey, 71 of them (76%) were female and 21 (22%) respondents

were male and one preferred not to tell his/her gender and one did not fill out. As mentioned previously, 19 of the respondents participated in the follow-up interviews. 14 of them (73.7%) were female and 4 teachers (21.1%) were male and one indicated “prefer not to say”. The gender proportion for both quantitative and qualitative data was very similar. It is not surprising to have more females than males as the majority of international school teachers in Hong Kong are female. According to the statistics given by the School Education Statistics Section of the Education Bureau (EDB) in Hong Kong by the email enquiry, there were 3512 international school teachers in the academic year 2016-2017. 2,246 of them (63.9%) were female teachers.

The majority of the questionnaire respondents were middle-aged (see Figure 5.1). 32 participating teachers (34%) were 31 to 40 years old and 31 teachers (33%) were 41 to 50 years old. 18 of them (19%) were young teachers aged from 21 to 30 years old. 10 teachers were above 50 years old. In the survey, there were 3 missing data. It is not certain whether the respondents did not want to disclose their age or forgot to fill out that information but it is noted that the large group of the respondents were middle-aged 31 to 50 years old and they were assumed to be experienced teachers. The third largest group of teachers aged 21 to 30 were comparatively younger teachers.

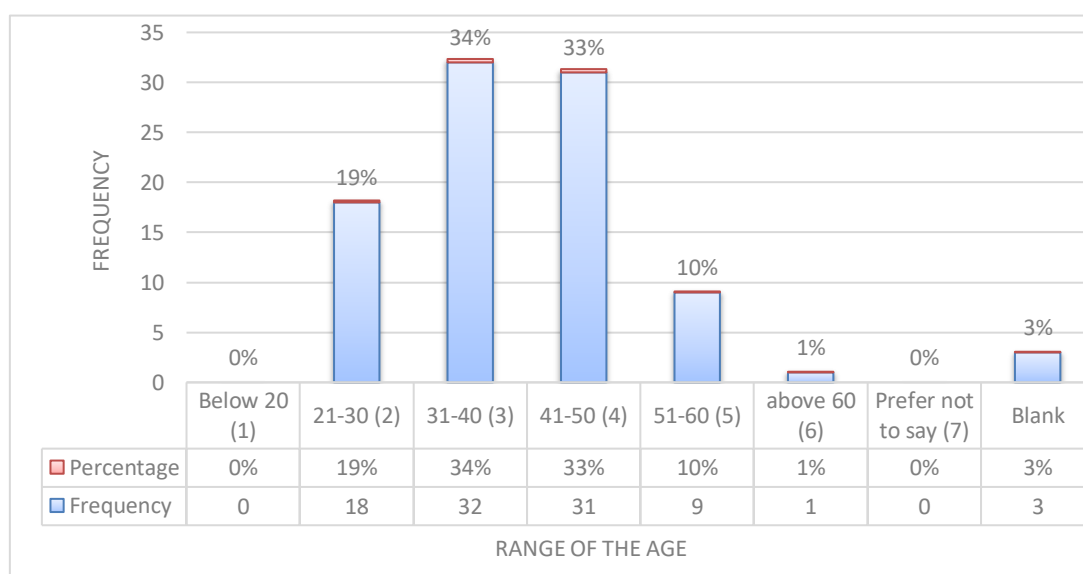


Figure 5.1: The age range of survey participants

Probably due to the age levels, more than half of respondents, 53 teachers (56.4%), were married and 35 teachers (37.2%) were single and the rest were widowed (1.1%), separated (1.1%), divorced (2.1%), and preferred not to say (2.1%).

The nationality of the participating teachers from the highest to the lowest representation included 37 Canadians (39.4%), 21 British (22.3%), 16 Australians (17%), 4 Americans (4.3%), 3 Indians (3.2%) 3 South Africans (3.2%), 2 New Zealanders (2.1%), 1 representative from Barbado, China, Spain, and one of the European countries. 4 respondents did not indicate their nationality (see the Figure 5.2).

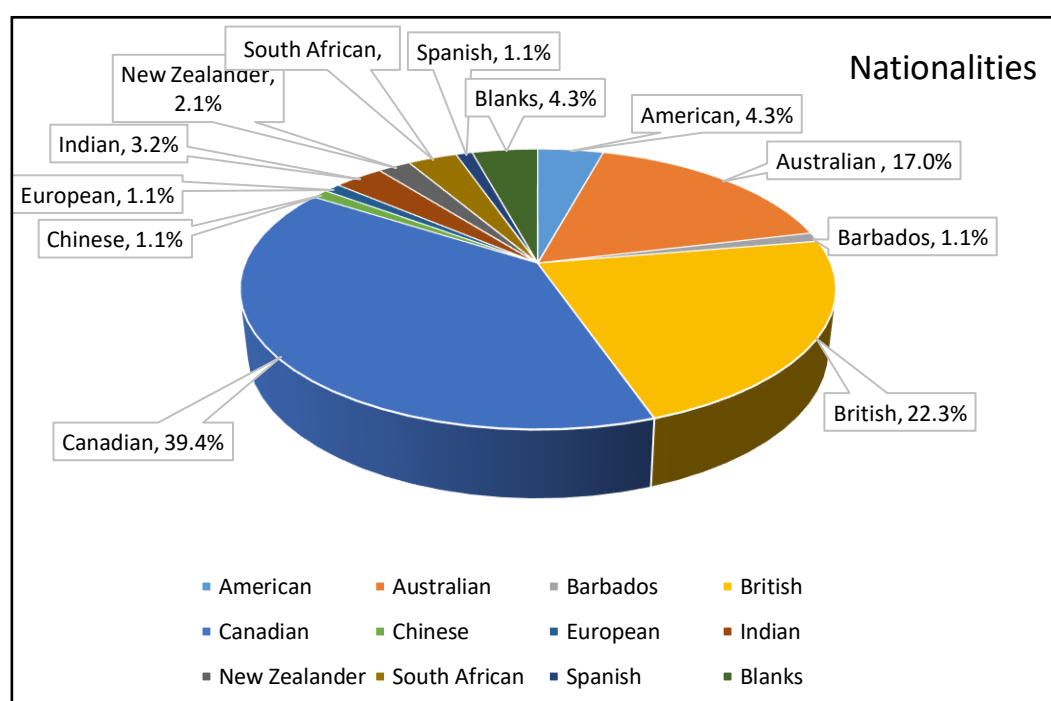


Figure 5.2: Nationalities of survey participants

In this study, since the researcher has been working in an international school for many years, some of the participants were her current or past colleagues. Some of them were Canadians. However, it is noted that most of the participants were from English speaking countries like the United Kingdom, United States, Canada and Australia since English was a major medium of instructions in international schools because international schools originally were set up to serve expatriates living in Hong Kong (Ng, 2012). Also, the schools like to recruit expatriate teachers from countries like the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and United States for their knowledge of curriculum. The international

schools in Hong Kong offer a wide range of overseas national curricular but the UK National curriculum, Canadian curriculum, American, Australian curriculum and International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum are the major curricular. This survey includes the representatives from these major nationalities.

Regarding the number of teaching years in Hong Kong, since most of the international schools offered a 2-year contract, data of teaching years were grouped in every two years, 0 to 2 years, 3 to 4 years, etc. and are shown in Figure 5.3. 11 teachers (11.7%) have been working for 0 to 2 years and they were most likely in their first contract. 21 of them (22.34%) have been working for 3 to 4 years, 11 teachers (11.7%) for 5 to 6 years, and it is unexpected to see that more than half, 51 of them (54%) have stayed longer and have been teaching in Hong Kong for more than 6 years. However, when referring to other data about Hong Kong permanent residents, only 36 teachers (38.3%) were Hong Kong permanent residents living in Hong Kong continuously for at least 7 years. Some teachers might have left Hong Kong and then returned and thus they are not eligible for the permanent residence.

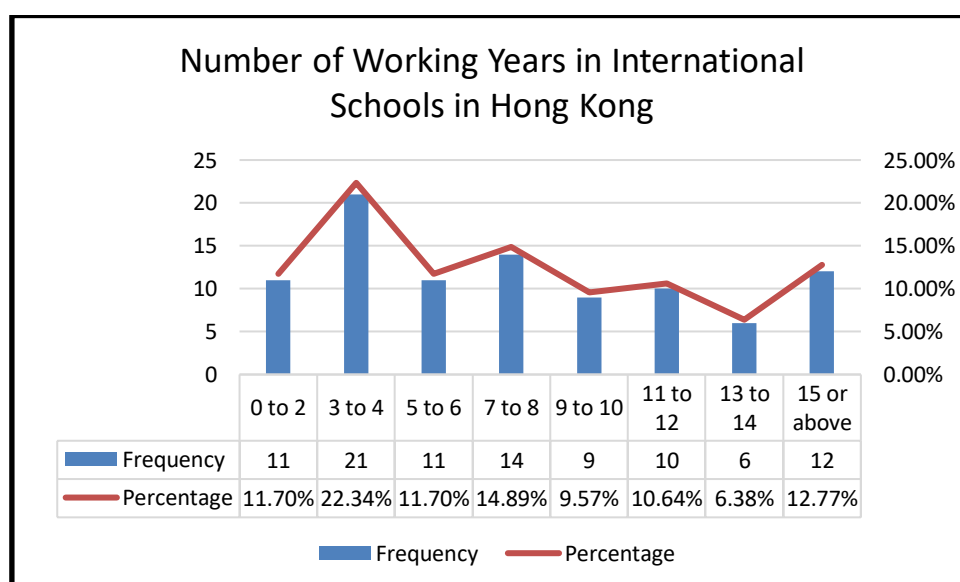


Figure 5.3: Number of working years in international schools in Hong Kong

The finding shows that the majority of them (62 teachers, 66%) have been serving more than 4 years.

It can be argued that most of the expatriate teachers have a long commitment to teaching in Hong Kong. However, the data from the survey cannot explain the reason for their long stay but probably it can be explored from the qualitative data in the next chapter.

For these participants, 35 of them (37%) actually left Hong Kong and 3 (3%) were going to leave. Figure 5.4 indicates their residence status at the time when they filled out the questionnaire. In consideration of age group and residence status, comparatively, the younger group (21-30), the ratio of staying in Hong Kong to leaving Hong Kong is almost 1 to 1 (9 participants are still here but 8 have left and 1 is going to leave). It supports the claim of some research like Ingersoll (2001) that younger teachers have a higher tendency to leave.

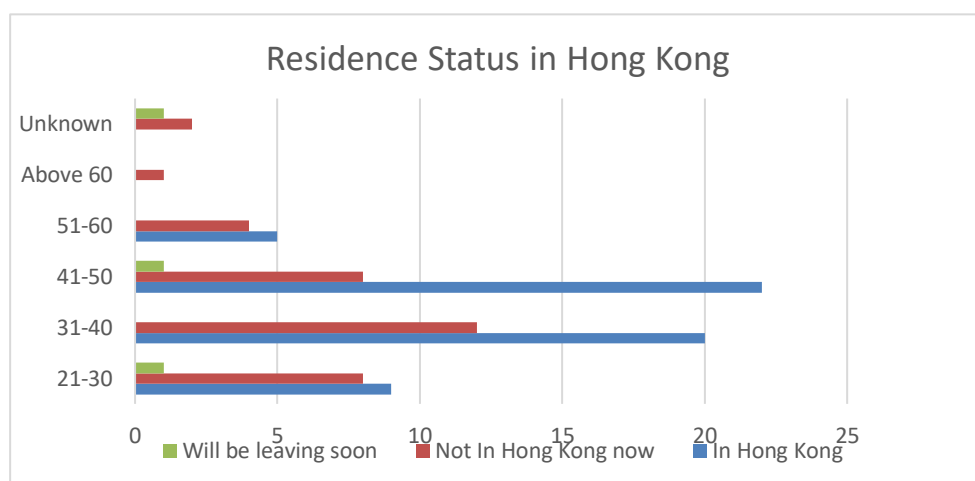


Figure 5.4: Residence Status in Hong Kong

In the survey, the respondents were asked to tell the grade level(s) they are teaching or taught in Hong Kong. To simplify the findings, the data were grouped into 4 categories, Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary and Multiple Sections. It is found that 36 (38.3%) are Primary teachers, and 36 (38.3%) were Secondary teachers and 11 of them (11.7%) were Kindergarten teachers. 11 of them were teaching more than one section, for example, one of the teachers were teaching both Primary and Secondary sections (see Figure 5.5).

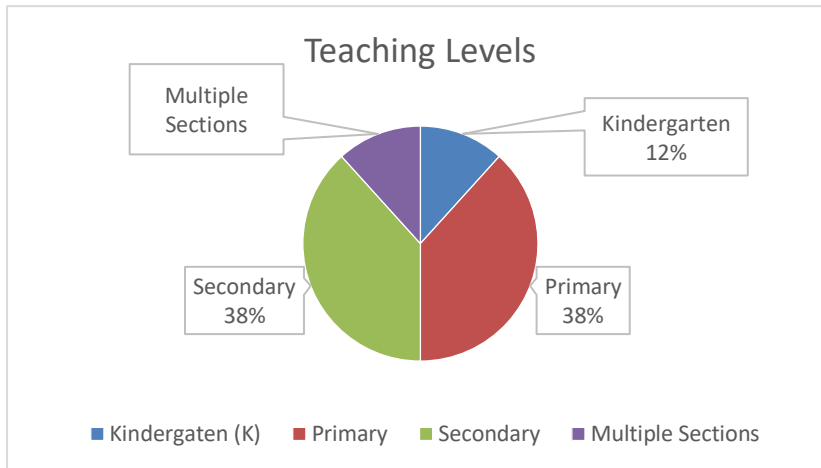


Figure 5.5: Teaching levels

The respondents were serving in different international schools in Hong Kong. Figure 5.6 indicates the number of international schools they served for. Some of them even worked in more than one international schools in Hong Kong. Over 54% worked at 1 school in Hong Kong. However, 43 participants (46%) worked for more than 1 school including 6 participants worked at 2 schools. Another 6 participants worked at 4 schools and 2 participants even worked at 5 schools and one even worked for 7 schools.

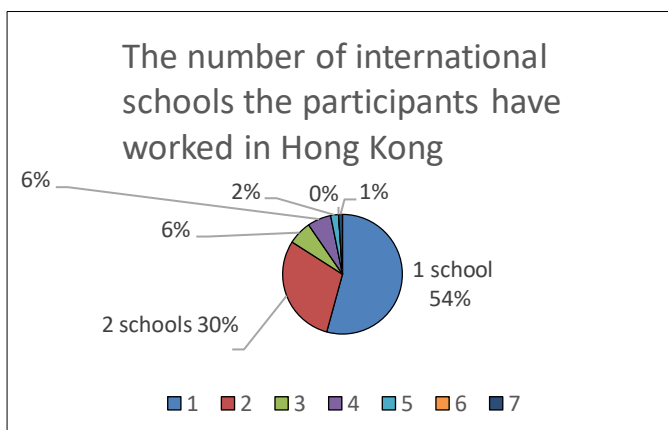


Figure 5.6: Number of Schools

It implies that the mobility of expatriate teachers emerges not just out of Hong Kong but also among schools in Hong Kong. It is probably associated with their long years of teaching in Hong Kong. Some turnover studies claim the positive relationship between administrative leadership and teacher turnover (Mancuso, 2010; Benson, 2011). The administrative leadership may be a cause of teachers leaving that school but probably they just moved to another school in the same region.

Since these teachers have different teaching experiences in Hong Kong, they may know the situation of teacher turnover in different schools. Thus, even if not all of them indicated their serving schools, 25 international schools were indicated in the survey. They are listed in Table 5.1 below. It represents the findings from a wide variety of international schools in Hong Kong.

Australian International School	Beacon Hill School	Canadian International School
Carmel School	Christian Alliance International	Clearwater Bay School
Creative Secondary school	Delia School of Canada	Discovery College
French International School	German Swiss International School	Hong Kong International School
International College Hong Kong	The ISF Academy	Kellett School
Kennedy School	Korean International School	Nord Anglia International School
Renaissance College	South Island School	Stamford American International
The Harbour School Hong Kong	Victoria Shanghai Academy	West Island School
Woodland Pre-Schools		

Table 5.1: The international schools where the respondents have worked.

Findings for Research Question 1 from the Questionnaire

The first research question is “What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?” and the answers are reflected in Questions 6 and 7 in the questionnaire. As Lee (1996) claims, when a person decides to move out of their home country, there are two forces, push and pull factors to influence the decision of migration. The Pull factors are associated with areas which hold people to stay and on the contrary push factors in an area which lead people to leave. In Question 6, participants were asked to indicate the importance of the given push factors adopted from the AFT report (see Table 5.2 below) played in their decision to consider leaving their home country.

In this question, the participants were asked to indicate the level of importance from the range of “Not at all important” to “Extremely Important” in 5 Likert scales for the above push factors. A code number was assigned to each response, 1 for Not at all important, 2 for Slight important, 3 for Somewhat important, 4 for Very important and 5 for Extremely important. Then, they were asked to

give other reasons not included in the push factors to cause them leaving their home country.

We can see the result of the responses for each push factor for leaving the home country in Table 5.2. The responses were coded and descriptive statistics were calculated by using the Excel formulas. We can see that among the push factors, the highest factor is “look for better job opportunities” and the mean was 3.79 and 33 participants (35%) indicated this factor as extremely important when they planned to consider leaving their home country. The second and third highest means are also related to the job, the mean was 2.78 for “Low compensation and benefits in my country” and 2.41 for “Less job security” respectively. Lillie, et al., (2013) suggest, the cause of labour migration was related to poverty and unemployment. Lack of job opportunities in sending areas is a common push factor to cause people to move (European Communities, 2000). In the open question of the Question 6, 4 teachers further added “Competitive teaching job market”, “Very hard to get a teaching job in Toronto”, “There were very few teaching jobs in my home country” and “opportunity for a job in English and not in French” to explain how they interpreted the factor of “look for better job opportunities” as the reason of leaving their home country.

However, it is regarded that international school teachers with a professional qualification might not find it difficult to get a teaching job. Instead, lucrative work opportunities in the world may motivate them to relocate. These teaching professionals may look for a better job opportunity on the worldwide international school circuit. This is further explored in the part of interviews in the next chapter.

With reference to Table 5.2, the means for Political Stability, Safety Environment and Poor Working Conditions are less than 2 (M=1.38, 1.72 and 1.98 respectively). It shows that these are less likely to be factors causing them to move to work in other countries. 75 respondents (80%, a very high percentage) indicated “Political stability” as “Not at all important”. This implies the respondents

might come from countries where there is relative political and environmental safety. With reference to their nationalities, most of them came from politically safe and comparatively rich countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, United States, and Australia.

Push Factor	N	Not at all important 1	Slightly important 2	Somewhat important 3	Very important 4	Extremely important 5	Mean	Standard Deviation
a. Low compensation and benefits in my country	94	21%	19%	28%	24%	7%	2.78	1.25
b. Family obligations	94	50%	18%	16%	4%	12%	2.10	1.38
c. Political stability	94	80%	10%	3%	7%	0%	1.38	0.87
d. Safety environment	94	67%	10%	11%	10%	3%	1.72	1.18
e. Poor working conditions	94	54%	15%	14%	13%	4%	1.98	1.26
f. Improvement in living conditions	94	41%	13%	24%	17%	4%	2.30	1.29
g. Less job security	94	41%	11%	19%	22%	6%	2.41	1.39
h. Look for better job opportunities	94	10%	5%	17%	33%	35%	3.79	1.25

Table 5.2: Push Factors for Leaving the Home Country

The second part of Question 6 is an open-end question. The participants were asked to give other reasons not included in the given factors to cause them leaving their home country. Only 62 out of 94 participants responded to this part of the question. 2 participants indicated no other reasons. 1 indicated that it is difficult to answer the question as it was poorly phrased. 4 teachers gave the explanation about the job opportunities in their home country including “Competitive teaching job market”, “Very hard to get a teaching job in Toronto”, “There were very few teaching jobs in my home country” and “opportunity for a job in English and not in French”. The other 55 participants gave the responses related to personal reasons or organizational issues. Some respondents also gave more than one reasons. These responses can be categorized into “Organizational Variables”, “Individual Work-Related Variables” and “Individual Non-Work Related Variables” based on Mobley’s model of the causes and correlates of turnover (1982).

Individual Non-Work Variables

The majority of the responses (54) were related to the individual non-work variables. They included “opportunities to travel and adventure” (27 responses), “paying off student loans” (3 responses), “change of the spouse’s job” (4 responses), “seeking new life experiences” (4 responses), “experience new cultures” (9 responses), “climate of home country ” (3 responses), “dissatisfaction with political situation of home country” (2 responses), “family issue” (1 response) and “relationships in a new country” (1 response).

Individual Work Variables

9 responses were related to individual work variables. 8 of them were related to personal professional development - “a desire to see if a different education system and associated pupils would bring greater job satisfaction”, “teaching a different curriculum in a different environment”, “new teaching challenge”, “possible advancement” and “international experience”. One contributed the reason to the workload at home country “Workload: 60 hours a week”.

Organizational Variables

4 responses were related to the organization variables. One mentioned funding for his/her position was cut and the other three were related to comparative lower salary in their home country. The respondents explained, “Exchange rate and time made Hong Kong salary part double plus low tax rate very financially appealing”, “my salary was not low in my home country. It is however low relative to the salary I receive in Hong Kong”, “opportunity to make more money abroad”.

From the above responses, we can conclude that better job opportunities is the most important driving force to motivate these expatriate international school teachers to work abroad. However, the influence of individual non-work variables to push them to work overseas should also be noted. One of motivations is “Opportunities to travel” which was mentioned by 27 respondents. It is consistent

with the study of Odland and Ruzicka (2009) which discovered the opportunity for travelling as a distinctive factor to motivate international school teachers to move. This is also reflected in the pull factors which draw expatriate international teachers to choose Hong Kong as their destination.

For the second part of the Research Question 1, it is to explore what motivates the expatriate teachers to select Hong Kong to teach. It is asked in Question 7 which is to look at the pull factors which motivate the participants to move to Hong Kong. There are 12 factors where the participants needed to indicate the level of importance when they decided to teach in Hong Kong. The responses were coded and descriptive statistics were calculated and the results are shown in Table 5.3: Pull Factors for Moving to Hong Kong below.

Factors		N	Not at all important 1	Slightly important 2	Somewhat important 3	Very important 4	Extremely important 5	Mean	Standard Deviation
a.	Salary	94	3%	3%	20%	43%	31%	3.95	0.97
b.	Higher compensation and benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	94	17%	9%	17%	37%	20%	3.35	1.36
c.	Family Ties	94	69%	9%	5%	10%	7%	1.78	1.33
d.	More job opportunities	94	16%	13%	24%	29%	18%	3.20	1.32
e.	Political stability	94	48%	15%	19%	14%	4%	2.12	1.27
f.	More economical and social stability	94	29%	17%	29%	17%	9%	2.60	1.30
g.	Better Living conditions	94	31%	22%	29%	13%	5%	2.39	1.20
h.	Better working conditions	94	27%	11%	28%	26%	10%	2.81	1.34
i.	Professional development interests	94	21%	13%	23%	27%	16%	3.03	1.38
k.	Desire to work and live in different cultures	94	5%	3%	0%	33%	59%	4.36	1.04
l.	Intercultural experience	94	3%	3%	10%	35%	49%	4.23	0.98

Table 5.3: Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong

In Table 5.3, we can see that the highest factor is “desire to work and live in different cultures” and the mean was 4.36 (SD=1.04) and 59 out of 94 participants (63%) indicated this factor as extremely important when they decided to move to Hong Kong. The second highest mean (M=4.23, SD=0.98) is also related to cultures, i.e. “Intercultural experience”. The next two highest factors were related to the job, “salary” (M=3.95, SD=0.97) and “high compensation and benefits (e.g. health insurance,

retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)" (M=3.35, SD=1.36). On the contrary, the factor "family ties" had the lowest mean (M=1.78, SD=1.33). The mean for "more job opportunities" was 3.20 (SD=1.32). "More job opportunities" is the major push factor for motivating the teachers to leave their home country but that is not the highest pull factor for attracting teachers to teach in Hong Kong. It might be because of the rapid expansion of international schools in Asia providing more job opportunities. Relocate Global (2018) recited the report of ISC Research and indicated 32 per cent growth of the number of international schools in East Asia in four years. It seems that the reason these expatriate teachers chose Hong Kong as their destination was more related to individual non-work factors including "desire to work and live in different cultures" and "Intercultural experience".

The further elaboration by the respondents was given in the second part of Question 7 which is also an open-ended question. The participants were asked to give other reasons not included in the given pull factors to cause them to work in Hong Kong. Only 26 gave responses to this question. Two participants indicated there are no other reasons. The rest of the responses were categorized in the following.

Almost half of them (11 out of 26) gave the reasons related to various individual non-work factors as below:

- travel opportunities - *"ability to travel in Asia"*;
- spouse's job - *"moved for husband's job", "Job available for wife and myself in a same school"*
- a connection to the family - *"Hong Kong allowed me to reconnect with my roots"*;
- a pursuit for personal interest - *"I wanted to continue to play rugby in HK so I needed a job!"*
- friend's recommendation - *"I had friends who had previously gone there to teach and they were loving it!" "more friends in Hong Kong"*;
- personal debt - *"pay off student debt"*.

Among non-work factors, a personal factor including family reason is still the influential factor for married participants. They moved to Hong Kong passively and it was not determined by themselves or related to any pull factor of the destination country. They relocated just because they followed their spouse who changed the job to work in Hong Kong.

However, Hong Kong itself is still an attraction for some westerners. Thus 8 responses were related to Hong Kong. *“Had lived there before” “My experience of travelling to HK” “diverse geographically” “ease of adaption due to English language” “HK is very easy to life as an expat compared to many other Asian cities”. “riding motorcycles and natural beauty/mountains/ ocean”.*

The remaining 5 responses were related to the job *“opportunity to enter top international school in Asia” “offered to teach what I studied in my degree program” “professional connections” “Transfer from Singapore school under the same company for startup in Hong Kong” “opportunity to teach my favourite subject, visual arts”.*

To sum up, looking for better job opportunities is the most common reason for expatriate teachers to leave their home country. However, their reason for choosing Hong Kong as their destination is more related to their own individual non-work factors including “desire to work and live in different cultures” and “Intercultural experience” and personal matters.

Findings for Research Question 2 from the Questionnaire

The second research question is “What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong?” This was asked in Question 9. In this question, the participants were asked to indicate the level of importance of the given factors when they consider leaving Hong Kong. All of the participants (N=94) answered this question. The findings are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Factors to determine if leaving or staying in Hong Kong

Factors	N	Not at all important 1	Slightly important 2	Somewhat important 3	Very important 4	Extremely important 5	Mean	SD
a. Job availability	94	32%	9%	20%	27%	13%	2.80	1.46
b. Salary	94	31%	12%	14%	37%	6%	2.77	1.39
c. Benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	94	28%	7%	18%	34%	13%	2.97	1.43
d. Opportunities for professional development	94	28%	13%	16%	32%	12%	2.87	1.42
e. Opportunities for promotion	94	26%	7%	20%	30%	17%	3.05	1.45
f. Autonomy or control over your own work	94	21%	13%	17%	33%	16%	3.10	1.40
g. Working conditions (e.g. facilities, classroom resources, teaching assignments)	94	23%	15%	13%	35%	14%	3.01	1.42
h. Recognition and support from administration	94	19%	9%	22%	24%	26%	3.29	1.43
i. Administrative leadership	94	21%	9%	19%	31%	20%	3.20	1.43
j. Safety of environment	94	39%	11%	15%	23%	12%	2.57	1.49
k. Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration	94	32%	9%	18%	20%	21%	2.90	1.56
l. Degree of Cultural adjustment	94	35%	18%	19%	22%	5%	2.45	1.32
m. Sense of personal accomplishment	94	27%	6%	17%	33%	17%	3.07	1.47
n. Family matters	94	17%	6%	16%	26%	35%	3.55	1.46
o. Age	94	29%	10%	21%	26%	15%	2.88	1.45
p. Cost of living and living conditions	94	26%	7%	17%	34%	16%	3.07	1.45
q. Challenges of cultural shock	94	49%	18%	16%	17%	0%	2.01	1.16
r. Social relationships with colleagues	94	40%	19%	18%	16%	6%	2.29	1.32
s. Teacher input in decision making	94	28%	15%	21%	24%	12%	2.78	1.39
t. Student discipline	94	39%	18%	18%	17%	7%	2.35	1.35
u. Ability to balance personal life and work	94	27%	9%	20%	22%	22%	3.05	1.51
v. Workload	94	26%	12%	19%	23%	20%	3.01	1.48
w. Job satisfaction	94	21%	4%	13%	39%	22%	3.37	1.44
x. Commitment to work	94	28%	10%	23%	26%	14%	2.88	1.42

Among the factors, the top 5 highest means are “Family matters” (M=3.55, SD=1.46), “Job satisfaction” (M=3.37, SD=1.44), “Recognition and support from administration” (M=3.29, SD=1.43), “Administrative leadership” (M=3.20, SD=1.43) and “Autonomy or control over your own work” (M=3.10, SD=1.40). It shows that the factor “Family matters” influences most on the decision for these expatriate teachers to leave Hong Kong. The other four influential factors are job related.

For Question 10, the participants were asked to select only one of the factors among these 24 items which they considered as the most important reason in their decision to leave their teaching job in Hong Kong. All participants replied to this question and the results are listed in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: The most important reason for the decision to leave the teaching job in Hong Kong

Items	Frequency	Percentage
n. Family matters	44	46.81%
p. Cost of living and living conditions	7	7.45%
b. Salary	6	6.38%
a. Job availability	5	5.32%
h. Recognition and support from administration	5	5.32%
k. Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration	5	5.32%
o. Age	5	5.32%
c. Benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	3	3.19%
w. Job satisfaction	3	3.19%
e. Opportunities for promotion	2	2.13%
i. Administrative leadership	2	2.13%
q. Challenges of cultural shock	2	2.13%
s. Teacher input in decision making	2	2.13%
d. Opportunities for professional development	1	1.06%
m. Sense of personal accomplishment	1	1.06%
u. Ability to balance personal life and work	1	1.06%
f. Autonomy or control over your own work	0	0.00%
g. Working conditions (e.g. facilities, classroom resources, teaching assignments)	0	0.00%
j. Safety of environment	0	0.00%
l. Degree of Cultural adjustment	0	0.00%
r. Social relationships with colleagues	0	0.00%
t. Student discipline	0	0.00%
v. Workload	0	0.00%
x. Commitment to work	0	0.00%
	94	100.00%

The factor “family matters” is the highest, 44 out of 94 participants (46.81%) regarded that as the most important reason for them to decide to leave Hong Kong. This is consistent with the result of Question 9, in which, “Family matters” ranked the top and the mean was 3.55 (SD=1.46). However, it is different from the result of Question 9, the second highest factor is not the job-related factors like “Job satisfaction” or “Recognition and support from administration” as indicated in Question 9 but that is related to “cost of living and living conditions” (7.45 %). The mean of “cost of living and living conditions” was 3.07 (SD=1.45) in Question 9. 26% of the respondents even indicated that “not at all important”. Actually only 7 respondents (7.45%) chose this as the most important factor and this implies that the factor “cost of living and living conditions” is the concern for particular teachers but not all of them.

As stated previously, 35 of them (37%) actually left Hong Kong and 3 (3%) were going to leave. Thus, the turnover factors here actually include both retrospective factor and predictive factor. The retrospective factor is the “cause of turnover after it has occurred” (Mobley, 1982, p. 80) and that

probably is the actual factor causing them to leave. However, for those who are still in Hong Kong, the turnover factor is predictive here and that is the factor which they consider most at this point of time.

Table 5.6: The most important reason for the decision to leave the teaching job in Hong Kong corresponding to their residence status

	In Hong Kong		Not In Hong Kong now		Will be leaving soon	
a. Job availability	4	4%	1	1%		0%
b. Salary	5	5%	1	1%		0%
c. Benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	2	2%	1	1%		0%
d. Opportunities for professional development	1	1%		0%		0%
e. Opportunities for promotion	2	2%		0%		0%
f. Autonomy or control over your own work	3	3%		0%		0%
g. Working conditions (e.g. facilities, classroom resources, teaching assignments)	4	4%		0%		0%
h. Recognition and support from administration		0%	1	1%	1	1%
i. Administrative leadership		0%	2	2%		0%
j. Safety of environment		0%		0%		0%
k. Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration		0%	1	1%		0%
l. Degree of Cultural adjustment		0%		0%		0%
m. Sense of personal accomplishment	1	1%		0%		0%
n. Family matters	19	20%	24	26%	1	1%
o. Age	4	4%	1	1%		0%
p. Cost of living and living conditions	6	6%		0%	1	1%
q. Challenges of cultural shock	1	1%	1	1%		0%
r. Social relationships with colleagues		0%		0%		0%
s. Teacher input in decision making		0%	2	2%		0%
t. Student discipline		0%		0%		0%
u. Ability to balance personal life and work	1	1%		0%		0%
v. Workload		0%		0%		0%
w. Job satisfaction	3	3%		0%		0%
x. Commitment to work		0%		0%		0%
	56	60%	35	37%	3	3%

Table 5.6 indicates the breakdown of turnover factors based on their residence status. It shows that the “family matters” factor is still the major turnover factor for no matter stayers or leavers. 24 out of 35 leavers attributed “family matters” as the major reason to leave and 19 out of 56 stayers chose it as the major consideration of leaving. 1 out of 3 participants who were leaving soon indicated “family matters” is the turnover factor.

Additionally, 11 stayers consider job benefits most including job opportunity, salary and job benefits but only 3 leavers indicated these are the reason for leaving. Perhaps the future job benefits are the consideration for the stayers but only very few actual leavers left because of that. Other job-related factors like “Recognition and support from administration” and “Administrative leadership” lead to the departure of 3 leavers but none of stayers chose it as the most important factor. Probably the stayers are satisfied with the administrative leadership in general but not for some leavers.

It is also worth noting that “cost of living” has a big contrast among the teachers. As mentioned previously, the mean of “cost of living and living conditions” factor was 3.07 (SD=1.45) in the Question 9. 26% of the respondents indicated that “not at all important” but 7 respondents (7.45%) chose this as the most important factor. Among these 7 respondents, 6 of them are stayers and one is going to leave. It implies that the cost of living is the concern for the stayers and that may cause them to leave in the future.

To round up, the factor related to “family matters” is the most influential factor to lead the expatriate international school teachers to decide if staying or leaving Hong Kong. The job-related factors like “job satisfaction”, “Recognition and support from administration” were considered in general but not the most critical reason for most of the teachers especially for those who are still working in Hong Kong. It should be noted that “cost of living” has a big contrast among the teachers. The reason for this difference is worth being looked at in the follow-up interviews.

Findings for Research Question 3 from the Questionnaire

The last research question is “What are the thoughts of teacher turnover from the experience of international school teachers in Hong Kong?” Correspondence to this research question, in Question 8 participants were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree on the given

statements about their satisfaction with working in Hong Kong, planning to stay, teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong and in their serving schools. Findings are shown in Table 5.7 below.

	N	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Mean	S. D
I am/was satisfied with teaching/working in Hong Kong	94	2.13%	4.26%	4.26%	50.00%	39.36%	4.20	0.87
I am planning to stay and teach in Hong Kong	94	20.21%	21.28%	18.09%	22.34%	18.09%	2.97	1.41
I think teacher turnover is high in international schools in Hong Kong.	94	0.00%	23.40%	22.34%	37.23%	17.02%	3.48	1.03
I think teacher turnover rate is high at my school.	94	4.26%	32.98%	15.96%	29.79%	17.02%	3.22	1.20

Table 5.7: Satisfaction with working in Hong Kong

The mean for “I am/was satisfied with teaching /working in Hong Kong’ was very high, 4.2 (SD=0.87). It indicates that the majority of the participants were satisfied with teaching in Hong Kong. However, their opinion for planning to stay and teach was rather lower (M=2.97, SD=1.41). The mean for “I think teacher turnover is high in international schools in Hong Kong” was 3.48 (SD=1.03) and 3.22 (SD=1.20) for “I think teacher turnover rate is high at my school.” The teacher turnover rate was high in international schools at a medium level from these teachers’ perspective. When we look at the data closely, 37.23% of participants regarded teacher turnover is high in international schools in Hong Kong and 17% of the participants strongly agreed with this but when they were asked about the turnover at their school, only 29.79% agreed that the turnover was high but 32.98% of the participants disagreed that and 4.26% strongly disagreed that. This result suggests that some participants think the turnover rate is high in international schools in Hong Kong in general but it may be not so high in their serving schools.

Regarding the future planning, in Question 12, participants were asked if they planned to work in other countries apart from your home country. 41 out of 94 (44.68%) indicated they would plan to

work in other countries apart from their home country and 17 out of 94 (18.09%) said they would not. 34 (36.17%) participants were undecided and one did not answer. Though the majority of the participants were satisfied with teaching in Hong Kong, this result, on the contrary, implies that some international school teachers consider moving further. It may be caused by the phenomenon mentioned previously that teaching professionals like to look for a better job opportunity on the worldwide international school circuit. This was further investigated in the interviews.

To sum up, from the survey of 94 respondents, the results suggest that the factor of “look for better job opportunities” is regarded as the most influential push factor to cause the expatriate teachers to leave their home country. Additionally, results of the open questions also show that the individual non-work variables are also important. Among them, the factor “opportunities to travel and adventure” was mentioned most by the participants. It is consistent with the claim by Odland and Ruzicka (2009) about the departure for travelling.

The factor of “desire to work and live in different cultures” is the major pull factor for causing them to move to Hong Kong. After moving to Hong Kong, what the expatriate international school teachers considered most is one of the individual non-work variables, “family matters” to decide if they would stay or move out of Hong Kong. But the survey also indicates that some teaching professionals have thought of working in other countries. Regarding the significance of teacher turnover, the results suggest that some participants think the turnover rate is high in international schools in Hong Kong but it may be not high in their serving schools.

Based on the quantitative data, we have a general idea about why the expatriate international school teachers left their home country and moved to Hong Kong and also what they consider for staying and leaving Hong Kong again. We also have a general opinion about the thought of teacher turnover in Hong Kong from the teacher perspectives. However, there are still some unknown reasons and

phenomena which need to be looked at for instance we don't know how hard they found jobs in their countries and how the participants interpret their experience and what meaning they attribute to their experience (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). In order to achieve an understanding of how teachers infer their overseas teaching life and clarify how they interpret the issue of teacher turnover, detailed interviews were conducted to get in-depth views. The qualitative data is presented in the next chapter. The insights from both findings and how they related to the previous literature are explored in the Discussion Chapter.

Chapter 6: Findings from Qualitative Data

Introduction

In the previous chapter, quantitative data were analyzed based on the three research questions of this study. In the survey, participants were asked to evaluate the given pull and push factors for causing them to work abroad and choose Hong Kong as their teaching destination. They were also asked to express their opinions on a set of turnover determinants which might cause them to move again. However, the interpretation of the teachers may vary in terms of different perspectives. Interviews allow us to hear their voices and interpretations directly. The value of qualitative data is to listen to a personal interpretation and hear the explanations of the factors in person (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015).

In this chapter the interview data were examined. In the survey, the participants were invited to participate in the interviews. Though 57 participants (60.6%) chose “yes” for the interviews, 5 of them did not provide the contact information and 16 of them came from the same school. Due to the time constraint, the researcher tried to contact 22 participants from a variety of schools and finally 19 participants were interviewed to provide their insights on the issue of teacher turnover. They shared their personal experience of their overseas teaching journey. A semi-structured interview approach was adapted. Apart from a set of guided questions which directed the flow of the interviews, follow-up questions were asked based on the answers of respondents in order to reveal their pertinent insights. Their interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Transcripts were uploaded into the NVivo 11 which was used to organize the coded sources. As explained in the chapter of Methodology and Methods, nodes were mainly created grounded on Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966; AFT, 2009) and Mobley’s Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (Mobley, 1982) in the Vivo program. Transcripts were reviewed and coded under the relevant nodes.

In this chapter, qualitative data were organized into the following sections:

- Push factors for leaving their home country
- Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong
- Period of stays in Hong Kong
- Factors of teacher turnover – Individual non-work variables
- Factors of teacher turnover – external economy
- Factors of teacher turnover – organization variables
- Factors of teacher turnover – Individual work-related variables
- Issue of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong
- Satisfaction with teaching in Hong Kong

Participants' profiles

Before looking into the findings, we will look at the profile of interview participants. Among 19 interview participants, 14 of them (73.68%) were female and 4 teachers (21.05%) were male and one indicated “prefer not to say”. The majority of them were middle-aged. 8 participants (42.11%) were 41 to 50 years old and 6 participants (31.58%) were 31 to 40 years old and 1 of them was over 51 years old. Only 4 of them (21.58%) were young teachers aged 21 to 30. Due to their age level, more than half of them, 11 participants (57.89%) were married. One participant (5.26%) was separated and one preferred not to say. 6 of them were single (31.58%). 57.89% (11) of them had children.

Majority of them were from English speaking countries. Comparatively, there were more Canadians. 7 participants (36.84%) were Canadians. 4 participants (21.05%) were British and 2 participants (10.53%) were Americans and 2 are Australians and the other 2 were Indians. One was Barbados and the other one was Mainland Chinese. Regarding their residence status, the majority of them (14

participants out of 19, 76.68%) were still working in Hong Kong when they were interviewed. 5 participants (26.32%) moved out of Hong Kong already. 3 of them returned to Canada and one moved to Seoul and one moved to Switzerland (see Table 6.1 below). The detailed profiles of interview participants are included in Appendix 8 also.

Table 6.1: Interview participants' responses in the survey

		How long have you worked in Hong Kong?	What is your age?	What is your gender?	What is your citizenship	Are you still living in Hong Kong?
1.	Lagina	2 months	31-40	Female	United States	Yes
2.	Ella	13 years	41-50	Prefer not to say	Canadian	Yes
3.	Dabria	13 years	31-40	Female	Indian	Yes
4.	Nancy	4 years collectively	31-40	Female	Canadian	Yes
5.	Zara	8 years	21-30	Female	Chinese	Yes
6.	Jennifer	4 years	41-50	Female	British	Yes
7.	Dane	11 years	41-50	Male	Canadian	Yes
8.	Ada	6 Years	21-30	Female	Canadian	No – in Canada
9.	Barbie	2 years	21-30	Female	Canadian	No – in Canada
10.	Diana	4.5 years	31-40	Female	Barbados	Yes
11.	Judy	9 years	41-50	Female	British	Yes
12.	Katie	6 years	31-40	Female	British	Yes
13.	Sabrina	10 years	41-50	Female	Australian	No – in Seoul
14.	Tiffany	15 years	41-50	Female	Australian	No – in Switzerland
15.	John	3.5 years	31-40	Male	American	Yes
16.	Rod	2 years	41-50	Male	Canadian	Yes
17.	Sachi	12 years	41-50	Female	Indian	Yes
18.	Ken	3 years	21-30	Male	Canadian	No – in Canada
19.	Sandra	32 years	51-60	Female	British	Yes

The participants were from 17 different schools (see the Table 6.2). Most of them taught in Hong Kong for many years. 9 teachers (47.36%) worked for more than 6 years. 6 teachers even worked more than 10 years. 3 teachers (15.79%) were comparatively new to Hong Kong and worked for less than 2 years.

Table 6.2: Interview participants' serving schools

1. Australian International School	2. Canadian International School	3. Christian Alliance International school
4. Delia School of Canada	5. Discovery College	6. Beacon Hill School
7. German Swiss International School	8. Independent School Foundation Academy	9. Kellett School
10. Kennedy School	11. Korean International School	12. Nord Anglia International School
13. South Island School	14. Stamford American International School	15. The Harbour School Hong Kong
16. West Island School	17. Woodland Pre-Schools	

Table 6.3 indicates their teaching years in detail. 9 teachers (47.37%) were Primary teachers. 5 teachers (26.32%) were Secondary teachers and 5 teachers taught multiple sections.

Table 6.3: Teaching years

Teaching Years	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 2	3	15.79%
3 to 4	5	26.32%
5 to 6	2	10.53%
7 to 8	1	5.26%
9 to 10	2	10.53%
11 to 12	2	10.53%
13 to 14	2	10.53%
15 or above	2	10.53%
N	19	100.00%

Push factors for leaving their home country

The first research question is to find out the motivations for expatriate international school teachers to leave their home country and select Hong Kong to teach. In the interviews, the participants were asked about the reasons why they left their home country and decided to teach overseas. The factors including less job opportunities in the home country, opportunities for travel and exploration of the world, moving with the family, and the personal financial factor like paying the debts were mentioned in the interviews. In the following section the interpretations of these factors were presented.

Push factors for leaving their home country: Less job opportunities in the home country

Among 19 interview participants, 7 of them explained the job opportunities of their home country. They were from different countries including Canada, United States and China. From their experience, we can learn about the fewer job opportunities related to the economy, the teaching experience of the teachers, the subject being taught and the changes to the teaching environment.

More Canadian teachers attributed less job opportunities in Canada as their reason for teaching

overseas. Ella was a Canadian teacher who left Canada in 1996. She explained there were no economic opportunities at that time and said *“very difficult to get full time teaching jobs back home”*. Ella left home for a long period of time but teaching opportunities in Canada seems still inadequate for young teachers. Ken was a young Canadian teacher and he came to Hong Kong four years ago. The reason for working overseas was to get a full-time teaching job. He explained the path for a fresh graduate was *“two years of supply teaching, two years of short contracts before we could get a full year contract”*. Another young Canadian teacher, Barbie, also expressed *“there is a limited supply of permanent teaching jobs for new teachers”*. From their experiences, we can see that full-time teaching jobs are less available for beginner teachers in Canada.

Teaching opportunities are also related to the subject which teachers want to teach. Zara from Mainland China explained, *“In my city, we don't have many opportunities for that kind of field as we don't have many foreigners. So this is why I need to choose a different city to go to”*. Overseas teaching opportunities allow her to teach specialized subjects.

Changing teaching environment in the home country is also the reason for pushing teachers to seek overseas teaching opportunities. American teacher, John, explained, *“One reason I left Boston Public Schools, is a couple of schools actually closed down. They closed, I think, 6 or 12 schools.”* The closure of schools in Boston led John to seek jobs elsewhere from Mexico and then to Hong Kong. Another teacher also from the United States faced a similar situation. Lagina added, *“Pretty much frustration with work at home. Kind of a final straw as they were going to cut the funding for my position and so kind of the opportunity presented itself to go”*. Cutting funding and closure of schools push teachers in the US to seek overseas teaching opportunities.

It is consistent with the findings from the quantitative data that looking for better job opportunities is a major push factor to motivate expatriate teachers to teach away from home. From the survey,

the factor “look for better job opportunities” was the highest frequency factor with a mean, 3.79. 33 out of 94 participants (35%) indicated this factor as the extremely important factor when they consider leaving their home country.

The qualitative data could demonstrate how difficult they found their ideal teaching jobs at home country. From the sharing of Ken and Barbie, we know why the participants said *“it is hard to get a teaching job in Toronto.”* It is actually hard for new teachers to get a full-time teaching job. On the contrary, teaching abroad provides opportunities for them to start off their teaching career. From the explanation of John and Zara, we might realize that overseas teaching provides alternatives for experienced teachers also to teach in a better environment or opportunities for them to teach the subject they specialize in to enhance their professional growth.

The rapid expansion of international schools globally (ISC, 2015) can provide more lucrative job opportunities especially when the world has become one large employment pool for professionals. Lucrative work opportunities initiate the relocation of professionals like international teachers. In the global work market, the relocation of these professionals can be a vehicle to transfer skills and practices within the international education setting.

Push factors for leaving their home country: Opportunities for travelling and exploration of the world

In the survey, the factor “opportunities to travel and adventure” was not a given factor on the list for participants to choose. However, in the open-end question for participants, 27 out of 94 respondents mentioned “opportunities to travel and adventure” as a reason to cause them to work out of their country. This reason was given by expatriate teachers at different ages. Among these 27 respondents, only 4 were aged 21 to 30 and majority of them (17 out of 27 respondents) were aged over 41. If just based on this quantitative data, it is not sufficient to claim that the factor

“opportunities to travel and adventure” is a factor to push expatriate teachers at different ages to work overseas since it might be the reason when the respondents were young. However, it was further confirmed by the interview participants through their explanation.

Young people like adventure and try something new. To get paid to travel by teaching abroad has become a popular option for Western English teachers to broaden their travel experience (Wilson, 2018). A young Canadian teacher, Ada, recalled, *“I graduated fairly young and I wanted to travel, I wanted to explore the world, and I didn't want to do what all my friends were doing, which was just get married right away, get a house, get property”*. In the interview, she indicated travelling is the biggest factor for her teaching abroad. Another Canadian teacher, Nancy, also described teaching abroad as *“Mostly adventure-seeking”*.

As mentioned previously, this trend of getting paid to travel might motive not just young teachers but also experienced teachers who look for a breakthrough in life. Katie from Bristol added, *“I just wanted to travel and work in different countries really. And then teaching gave me a way of doing that. That wasn't the reason I became a teacher, but after I've been teaching a while, I heard that people could move to different countries and teach in other countries, and that was just something that really appealed to me.”* She actually wanted to work abroad when she was young but her husband didn't want to. Later, after divorce, she decided to work overseas. Jennifer just turned 40 and described her reason for leaving Scotland as *“a mid-life crisis”* to pursue a different life and explained *“they (international schools) would pay me a salary that would allow me to travel because I was a young mom and didn't get a chance to travel when I was younger”*.

Sabrina felt pretty exhausted from teaching in Australia and wanted to explore the world and said *“I was at a point in my career where I had climbed the ladder pretty quickly, and I was pretty exhausted from my work and wanted to explore the world a little more and travel overseas a little more than I*

was able to do. Australia's a long way from everywhere."

From the above experiences, we can see that the factor "opportunities to travel and adventure" motivates not just the young teachers but also the middle-aged teachers to work out of their country.

Push factors for leaving their home country: Moving with the family

Another influential personal factor to push these educators to move out is related to a family factor. Dabria followed her family to move from India to Hong Kong and said, *"Because my parents have been here for a long, long time. My dad has his own business here".* Another teacher, Lagina, followed her husband to move from the US to Hong Kong because *"my husband loves Hong Kong. He's been here before so we were pretty excited about the opportunity to move here."* Likewise, Sandra came to Hong Kong with her husband in 1981 and she said *"My husband got a job here..... So, when we came, I'd finished my teaching course and I had a job to go to, but then we moved to Hong Kong."*

Dabria, Lagina and Sandra worked away from home just because of moving with their family. It is unrelated to Push and Pull factors of the host country and home country but they were just pushed to leave by the family factor.

Push factors for leaving their home country: Pay off debts

For graduates, teaching abroad is a quicker way to pay off their student debts than teaching in their home country (Dunsmore, 2018). The comparatively higher teaching salary and benefits offered by the international schools have become lucrative attractions to young graduates who can travel in a new region, boost their teaching profiles (Wilson, 2018) and earn more money to pay off their debts (Birken, 2016). Among the interview participants, both Barbie and Diane regarded this as their reason for leaving home.

Barbie has returned to Canada after two-year teaching because she paid off the student debt and said *“I graduated with a lot of student debt. And back home right now there is a limited supply of permanent teaching jobs for new teachers, so in order for me to pay that off, I thought going abroad would be the best option for me.”* Paying the student loan was the reason for Diane to work overseas too. She explained, *“I needed to pay off my student loans and my job (at home) wasn't really helping me get very fast with that.”* Teaching abroad allowed them to settle their student debts quickly with the comparatively higher salary.

From their sharing, we learn the reasons for these expatriate teachers to leave their home country in terms of the external factor like less job opportunities at home, and individual non-work variables like travelling, moving with the family and paying off debts.

Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong

There are now about 10,282 international schools around the world, teaching 5.36 million students, based on the research by the International School Consultancy (ISC, 2019). Why did these teachers choose Hong Kong as their destination? In the following section, reasons were analyzed.

Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong: Higher Salary in Hong Kong

Based on the quantitative finding, “salary” ($M=3.95$, $SD=0.97$) was the third influential pull factor. However, it was regarded as the main reason for moving to Hong Kong by most of the interview participants. From the interpretation of them, we realize the international schools in Hong Kong actually offered a competitive salary and benefits which appeal to expatriate teachers and pulled them to work here. Also the expatriate teachers recognized they earned more in Hong Kong due to a higher exchange rate and lower Hong Kong tax rate.

Tiffany went to Hong Kong in 2002 from Australia and described her salary tripled here. She

explained *“the dollar was four to one at that time. So, my wage effectively tripled in the amount I was going to be making if I was converting back to Australian dollars. And also, the tax rate in Hong Kong was very low compared to Australia, so yeah, it was basically a financial choice.”*

John also admitted his salary in Hong Kong is much higher than his pay in the U.S. He said *“I do make significantly more here in my school (in Hong Kong) than I would in Boston. Yeah. A good chunk more..... So here, I probably make between US\$100,000 and US\$120, 000. In Boston, in the suburbs where I lived, in a place called Cape Cod, it wouldn't be more than US\$60,000. In Boston, they make US\$80,000”*. John earned almost US\$20,000-40,000 more in Hong Kong.

Jennifer also admitted her salary now was more than double than she earned in Scotland and said, *“I didn't realize it would be as much, actually. When I first came on my first package, it was only slightly more. But what I didn't realize was the tax rate which was lower and then the bonus system and the housing. That all made a massive difference. But now I'm more than double what I had had as a promoted teacher in the UK. I just hit the 40% (tax) rate because I was a promoted teacher.But over here, the tax rate is so much lower, so you have more money in your pocket.”*

Apart from annual salary, some teachers also received benefits package such as housing allowance, bonus, return ticket, etc. The new teachers are also offered the set-up support in terms of flight tickets, accommodation and even debts. Ada's original plan was to go to Australia and she chose Hong Kong finally due to a competitive salary package and start-up support. Ada explained, *“You're not supported in your move so you have to pay for your flight you own and get yourself set up on your own, whereas it felt I was going to be supported here. So overall it just seemed like a much better package and deal then.”*

Compared to teaching in local schools, the salary of international school teachers is higher. For

instance, one of the international schools in Hong Kong called CDNIS, new teacher employment packages include an annual basic compensation ranging from HK\$541,222 to HK\$789,685 and benefits including gratuity, medical and life insurance, additional allowance and relocation allowance (CDNIS, 2018). This is a very appealing cause for motivating the expatriates to work here.

Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong: Location and safety

The quantitative findings suggested that expatriate teachers choosing Hong Kong as their teaching destination was more related to “desire to work and live in different cultures”. Its mean was 4.36 (SD=1.04). 59 out of 94 participants (63%) indicated this factor as extremely important when they decided to move to Hong Kong. This was further elaborated by the interview participants. They shared how they felt safe in Hong Kong, how easy for them to work and live here and how close the expat community can support them in Hong Kong.

Before 1 July, 1997, Hong Kong was a British colony, it was easy for the UK citizens to stay and get jobs in Hong Kong like Sandra. She described *“pre-97 it was much easier for an expatriate to come to Hong Kong and to get a working visa and get a job. So, I was confident I'd be able to get work here”*.

After the handover to China, Hong Kong is still an international city and easy place for expatriates. Diana said *“It was really, really easy to get set up in Hong Kong, finding an apartment, getting utilities, and everything.”* Katie also thinks so and said *“I think it's a quite easy place to assimilate into, because of the language, because English is spoken so widely because you've got the dual Cantonese and English. All the signs are bilingual.So there's kind of that sense that it seems familiar somehow.”*

Sabrina's moving was caused by a social circle in Hong Kong. She said *“Some friends of mine had moved to Hong Kong to teach at the Australian International School, and I was in close contact with them. And they were just telling me how they loved it, and they were having a great time, and that*

Hong Kong was an amazing city.” The recommendation of friends convinced Sabrina to move and step out for her wish to explore the world. It is also a reason for Ken and his partner to choose Hong Kong as their destination. He added, *“We had a lot of friends who had been to this school (in Hong Kong), so we wanted to come to a familiar place that people we trusted had enjoyed for so long. So it was easy talking to them about it and learning about this experience.”*

For expatriates, Hong Kong itself is a place which makes them feel safe and a good location for them to start off the exploration in Asia with easy access to major cities in East and Southeast Asia. Hong Kong is known as a city with a large expat population and the official languages are Chinese and English. Thus, Hong Kong is an easy place for expats to work and live.

Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong: Opportunities for travel and intercultural experience

As mentioned in the quantitative finding, 49% of the respondents contributed “Intercultural experience” as the extremely important pull factor. In the qualitative data, participants explained how convenient the location and transportation system of Hong Kong was and allowed them to explore nearby Asian countries easily. For instance, the American teacher, John excitedly described *“many, many travels. Maybe 10 or 12, 15 (countries). I do a lot of traveling, as much as possible, and vacations and a lot of vacations that I can travel to. And I try to take the most. I try to take advantage of that”*. Katie also agreed that Hong Kong is *“good location in terms of travel, definitely”*. After she moved to work in Hong Kong, she did a lot of travelling *“Oh lots, I don't know (how many countries I have travelled). Lots of South East Asia, Australia, yeah lots of places, too many places to mention.”*

Hong Kong is conveniently located for weekend gateways. A fly to nearby countries just takes a couple of hours. A flight to Taiwan or the Philippines takes two hours. It is a great base to explore South East Asia and it has become an attraction for expatriate teachers who like to travel.

Pull factors for moving to Hong Kong: Better working conditions and professional development interests

The quantitative finding indicated that the mean for the pull factor “Better working conditions” was only 2.81 (SD=1.34). It might not be so significant factor for motivating them to move to Hong Kong compared to other pull factors. However, working in a top international school or the school which was able to provide professional development opportunities was appealing to them.

Some expatriates were confident with the education system in Hong Kong. John was one of supporters for that and he added *“there's a good school system in Hong Kong. I didn't really want to work in China. I'm pondering a job offer in a different Asian country, in India. So I know that education is taken quite highly here. So safety, education, salary, and-- all those are the biggest reasons I chose Hong Kong.”* John was confident with the education standard in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong was not a new place for Rod as he worked in Dongguan in China. He said, *“I got offered to work at a Tier 1-- a very good school, and I wasn't going to turn it down..... I'd always wanted to live in Hong Kong, but it wasn't planned to try to come to Hong Kong ”.* Hong Kong itself may not be the reason for Rod to come here but the school he is working at is.

The schools in Hong Kong also attracted Judy to relocate here and she said *“because I know that the schools had a very good reputation. So, they're kind of really looked after their staff. Not only were you paid quite well, but it's really quite good professional development”.*

Diana also admitted better professional growth in Hong Kong. She added, *“Before, I used to teach at a very small school. And I felt that there wasn't much scope for me to grow. So I wanted a new opportunity..... Hong Kong just seemed to be the best offer at the time.”*

Judy gave details about professional development opportunities offered at her school. She explained *“Well, external people coming into school, probably four, five times a year. And that's just the minimum. I could enroll, but I often don't, because there are a lot of professional development opportunities over weekends. But more informal or interschool professional development, sometimes once a month, sometimes a staff meeting once a week. It just depends what's happening at school.”* She agreed the school could take care of the staff well in terms of their professional development.

Although the working condition in Hong Kong in general may not be a main pull factor but working in a top school or a school with good professional development opportunities perhaps gives extra motive to work in Hong Kong.

To conclude, the major pull factors for leading expatriate teachers to move to Hong Kong is both related to organizational factors like “salary” and “income package” and individual factors including “desire to work and live in different cultures” as Hong Kong is an easy place for expatriates and it is a great base for those who like to travel. Working conditions and professional development in an international school setting draw the international teachers who regard Hong Kong as a desirable stop on the international school circuit.

Period of stays in Hong Kong

The quantitative finding showed that the majority of survey participants (62 teachers out of 94, 66%) worked more than 4 years. In the interview participants, 9 teachers out of 19 (47.36%) worked for more than 6 years. 6 teachers even worked more than 10 years. The survey finding was unable to tell the reason for their long stay but this was explored from the qualitative data which found that most of them actually planned for a short term stay but they stayed much longer than they planned.

Sabrina planned to work in Hong Kong as a working holiday but now she stayed for 10 years. She

laughed and said, *“Very unexpected I really did think I was going for two years and that I would just have a little working holiday, and then I would go home. And that didn't happen”*.

Jennifer initially planned to be in Hong Kong for two years and said *“I didn't particularly like the job in the school I was working in. And I was going to go home. And at the last minute, I decided that I wasn't ready to go home. So, I applied for the job that I have now. I have no idea how long I'm going to be in Hong Kong. I've just moved to Lamma because I love it, and it all depends on how much I enjoy living here and how my job goes”*. The change of living location made her continue to stay in Hong Kong.

When Katie first moved over, she didn't really know how long she would be in Hong Kong. She said, *“I was just, "Let's do my first contract, and see" basically, you know, I had no idea whether I was going to like it or anything. Now obviously, I've met my husband, he's from Hong Kong, and we have a child who has a Hong Kong passport and so we're definitely not going anywhere soon.”* After she set up her family here, she decided to stay and she was here for six years.

Sandra relocated to Hong Kong due to her husband's job. At the beginning, they thought they would just stay for a while. She explained *“We did not plan for how long. Initially we thought till my husband's job, and then we thought till the girls, they finish their schooling here. Now my girls are almost done..... So, we'll be here till. I think we're here for good. So, I don't know if we move or not”*. Finally, they were living in for 32 years and Hong Kong has become her home.

We can see that most of the international teachers stayed longer than they planned but it does not mean that they will not move out of Hong Kong. In the following section, it is going to look at what factors may lead these expatriates to consider staying or leaving Hong Kong.

Factors of teacher turnover

In response to the second research question that is “What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong?” in the interviews, the teachers were asked what their major consideration to decide whether to leave or stay in Hong Kong was. The responses were analyzed and grouped according to classes suggested by Mobley (1982): external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables, and individual work-related variables.

Among the 19 interviewees, most of them gave a single factor but 4 of them gave more than one factors in their decision. Among all determinants, the majority of them (84.21%, 16 out of 19) attribute to individual non-work variables – family matters (57.89%, 11 out of 19), living conditions and opportunities of travels (21%, 4 out of 19). When compared to their responses in the survey (see Appendix 9), it seemed that 3 respondents, Ken, Sandra and Sachi gave different responses. Actually, they expressed multiple reasons for them to consider but in the survey they were allowed to choose one option only.

Factors of teacher turnover – Individual non-work variables

As mentioned above, the majority of interview participants attributed to individual non-work variables. Among the individual non-work variables, 11 of them (57.89%) regarded family matters as a key factor to decide whether to stay or not and 4 participants actually left due to the family issue. This finding was consistent to the finding from the survey in which the factor “family matters” ranked also the top. 44 out of 94 participants (46.81%) regarded this as the most important turnover determinant. This factor was explored further with qualitative data. From the experience of interview participants, we can better understand what and how family matters influence their turnover decision.

Individual Non-work Variables – Family Matters

Family matters actually may vary for the participants but some are related to their family members. For the married participants, change of spouse's job is a common factor to give up their own career. For those who have stayed for long, taking care of the elderly in the home country is a driving force to make them leave their jobs in Hong Kong. For a single young teacher, a relationship at home is the cause.

Reconnection with friends and the sickness of her partner's mom is main reason for Ada to leave after 6 years of teaching in Hong Kong. She explained, *"The biggest reason is friends and family back home, feeling like you're missing out or you're not there for people when you need to be there and that's hard because you feel like as the years go on, you lose touch with your friends and family and you don't have as great of a connection to them anymore and so I think the biggest reason for us, is my partner. His mom is getting quite sick, so we wanted to go home and spend some time with her."*

Barbie left Hong Kong after two years of teaching due to a relationship. She said *"I think for me I have a relationship back home in Canada. I really, really wanted to go home; but I knew financially, staying here was the best option. So I had to weigh what was more important to me, money or the relationship, and I chose the relationship."* To maintain the relationship pushed Barbie to leave her teaching job in Hong Kong.

Though Ken indicated "Teacher input in decision making" as the factor he considered most to leave Hong Kong. However, in the interview, he also mentioned he left for setting up a family in Canada. *"But now the reasons we're leaving are we want to set up a family and start to-- we know we want to live in Canada down the road."* Compared to his career opportunities overseas, he finally valued more his personal life.

These three participants actually left due to the family concerns. For those who were still teaching in Hong Kong, the family factor was the most influential factor. Their decision was sometimes not made on their own but it involved the consideration of family members like husband or children or the elderly at home.

For instance, Diana did not have any major reasons to leave Hong Kong but when she considered her daughter, *she explained, "Well, at this point, I'm kind of juggling, I guess, professional goals and personal goals as well. I've also had a daughter since living in Hong Kong. So I'm wondering if maybe I might need to move closer to home, at some point, in the next three years so that she'll be able to be close to her family."*

For married teachers, their partner or spouse determined their decision of departure. Judy did not plan to move out. But this may change recently due to her husband and she explained, *"We've been talking with my husband because his job is, not a little unsure, but I think we need to be thinking about alternatives, just in case something happens. And we have been thinking about where he could move to and work. And teaching is transferable, so it's the kind of a place that I'd want to go, where I could bring up my children now, as opposed to me looking for the best school for me to teach in."* In Judy's priority, family went first. Due to her teaching experience, she thought it was more transferable to get a job in another country. Three other married female teachers, Katie, Sabrina and Sachi, had a similar priority to give up their own job for their husband.

According to the above experiences, personal life and family matter is the most influential individual non-work variable to cause expatriate international school teachers to think of quitting their jobs in Hong Kong. However, the living condition of Hong Kong is also a force to lead young expatriates to leave, which will be discussed in the next section.

Individual Non-work Variables – Living Conditions and Safety of Environment

The mean of “cost of living and living conditions” was 3.07 (SD=1.45) in the survey. Though 26% of the respondents indicated that “not at all important”, 7 respondents (7.45%), on the contrary, chose this as the most important factor. This implies that the factor “cost of living and living conditions” is the concern for particular teachers only. This was further revealed in the qualitative findings. 4 out of 19 interview participants contributed to this factor.

A couple of teachers with a high salary still showed concern about the rising cost of housing. Rod explained, *“Cost of living in Hong Kong isn't expensive. Housing is expensive. Yes, without a doubt. Number one reason for me, and anybody I know that I work with, is going to say that the cost of having to pay so much money to have a house, and even the size of the house for what you pay for, is so prohibitive.”* Rod attributed some good teachers moving out of Hong Kong to high housing cost. Even though the school provided him a housing allowance, he called that as “just a token” as it was not able to cover the high cost of housing.

John admitted he earned more in Hong Kong, however, the high cost of housing led him to reconsider whether to stay. He added *“the cost of living is significantly higher here than it is in the US”*. Owing to a high cost of living and air pollution, Hong Kong was not an ideal place for him to stay in the long term and he never viewed this was his home.

Lagina also mentioned the cost of housing which might drive her to move out of Hong Kong. She explained, *“Housing is not provided for us and the rent is pretty high (in Hong Kong). So that would be probably a big factor too. Probably housing, honestly. Finding someplace that is affordable to live.”* Lagina considered moving somewhere else with affordable housing.

These teachers actually were not young teachers and earned a high salary. Rob even had a housing

allowance but still felt unaffordable. Actually, they just moved to Hong Kong in these 4 years but in this period of time, the property price was rising sharply. The high cost of housing directly reduced their salary and hence their intention to stay.

Apart from the living condition, another individual non-work factor that is “safety of environment” worthy of note. In the quantitative finding, none of the participants regarded this was their major turnover factor and even 36 out of 94 (39%) of the survey participants indicated it is not important at all. However, 11 of them thought that was an extremely important turnover factor. This was perhaps explained by two of the interview participants. Both of them raised their concern about the air quality of Hong Kong. Jennifer admitted, *“Factors that would make me leave, pollution. If my health was to start suffering because of the pollution, I wouldn't want to stay.....”* and the other participant, John, from the United States also claimed that *“The other reason I'd want to leave would be this is not my home. I'd like to travel other places, and the pollution is one big reason I would leave”*.

Factors of teacher turnover – external economy

Employment opportunities in international education are increasing with the global growth of international schools. The availability of alternative jobs may lead to more movement of International school teachers.

In the survey, 32% of the participants indicated the factor “job availability” was not important at all when compared to other turnover determinants though 13% regarded that was the most important at all. In the qualitative finding, surprisingly, a couple of mid-aged teachers identified better job alternatives with a higher pay or professional growth opportunity in other regions as a cause to drive them to move.

For instance, Dane is getting closer to the age of retirement but he is still looking for a job prospect

and better pay to secure financial status for his family. He explained, *"Never be afraid of a better offer." And I've always had that in my head, especially if it, again, fits with the family and is even relatively in line with the income I'm making now. A better offer out there.*" Dane is preparing to look for another job opportunity elsewhere with a better offer and job prospect.

Factors of teacher turnover – organization variables

As discussed previously, salary was one of the pull factors to draw expatriate teachers to come to Hong Kong. However, as a turnover factor, with reference to the quantitative findings, only 6 out of 94 participants chose 'salary' as the most important turnover determinant. Similarly, from the qualitative data, only very few of the participants mentioned to move out for a higher salary. They included Lagina who moved to Hong Kong after her teaching position was cut in the United States. She said she may move further if better offers are available. Lagina said, *"It just seemed like a good opportunity, but we looked at Thailand and Singapore. Both pay a lot more for international teachers. So, if we moved, it'd be to get some more money somewhere else"*. According to Mobley, there is a strong relationship between pay levels and turnover rates. Yet, the salary for international school teachers is high and the salary package offered by the schools in Hong Kong is competitive. Perhaps that explained why it is not the motive for most of the teachers to move further.

Actually the survey participants regarded the importance of organization variables for turnover decision was just in general such as "Opportunities for professional development" (M=2.87, SD=1.42), and "Autonomy or control over your own work" (M=3.10, SD=1.40), "Working condition" (M=3.01, SD=1.42), "Recognition and support from administration" (M=3.29, SD=1.43) and "Administrative leadership" (M=3.20, SD=1.43). These factors were even not stated by most of the interview participants except Ken and Nancy.

Ken explained one of the reasons for him to return home was the autonomy over his work. He

explained, *“Having that back home, from what I understand, a lot of those positions have a lot of trust in the teachers to try new things and explore new strategies. And here, it's very limited. It's very restricted on what we can do. And if we have an idea, it'll take sometimes a year before we can implement something like that. So that is frustrating at times. But that was a big factor, for sure.”*

Ken valued the autonomy over his teaching work and appreciated the organization which could allow teachers to take initiatives to change and try something new. However, it seems that that was restricted in the school he worked in Hong Kong.

Nancy has a clear career goal. She admitted *“I'm willing to go almost anywhere, I'm more drawn by the position itself and how will it enhance my career?”* As a young and single teacher, Nancy did not mind going to any countries if she can get a job promoted at another school in other country.

Factors of teacher turnover – Individual work-related variables

In the survey, “Job Satisfaction” was the most significant turnover factors among the individual work-related variables turnover factor (see Table 5.4 in the Chapter 5). But the survey also revealed that most of the survey respondents were satisfied with their work in Hong Kong and the mean is 4.2 ($S=0.87$). Apart from the job satisfaction, it is worthy to note that how the individuals perceived their life and work and this could influence their turnover decision also.

In the survey, the mean score for the factor “ability to balance personal life and work” was 3.05 (see Table 5.4) and only one participant regarded it as the most important reason for the turnover decision. She was asked to explain this in the interview.

Sandra has been in Hong Kong for 32 years and Hong Kong has actually become her second home. As she described, there were a lot of factors for her to think about if moving out of Hong Kong. In the survey, she indicated the factor “Ability to balance personal life and work” as the most important

factor for her to consider for the departure. However, in the interview, she mentioned parents getting old and the high cost of living in Hong Kong as the reason for her to consider moving back to the UK. It seems Sandra chose different answers in the questionnaire and interview. But when we looked into what she explained, it is found that those two answers were just different interpretations of her reasons. She said, *"I think as our parents have gotten older. The pull for families back in the UK has had an impact. Cost of living here and property is a significant factor. We did go to Europe for two years, and that was a great experience. And I really enjoyed that and being able to teach in another international school."* Sandra enjoyed the teaching job in international schools and thought of teaching in another international school somewhere else after her children grew up. She pursued this teaching experience but at the same time, in reality, she thought of the elderly at home. That was what she meant to balance personal life and work.

To conclude, the respondents considered individual non-work variables the most as their factor for moving out of Hong Kong. Among the individual non-work variables, family matters (57.89%) is the most common factor among the interview participants to cause them to leave. This is consistent with the findings from the survey, in which, the "family matters" factor also ranks the most (3.55, S=1.46).

Issue of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong

In response to the third research question of this study "What are the thoughts of teacher turnover from the experience of international school teachers in Hong Kong?" the respondents were asked to share their thoughts of teacher turnover in their serving schools.

Based on the quantitative finding, 37.23% of participants agreed that teacher turnover was high in international schools in Hong Kong and even 17% participants strongly agreed with this. However, 32.98% participants regarded that turnover rate was not high in their serving schools. In general, they regarded high teacher turnover was a phenomenon in international schools in Hong Kong. This

contradiction probably can be clarified by the explanation of the interviewees. Among them, only 4 teachers out of 19 agreed that teacher turnover rate was high. 6 of them even disagreed that but more than half (9 out of 19) said it was undecided to comment on whether the teacher turnover is high or not.

Agreement with the high turnover in the international schools

Lagina thought the teacher turnover seemed high in her school and said, *"It seems to be. Yeah. I mean I've only been at my school a couple months, but there's already people that left in December so we're hiring new people for January. And I know there's a lot of people they're been planning to not renew their contract at the end of the year. And just talking to people around, it seems like probably about half of the people leave every year."* However, Lagina was very new to Hong Kong and her school. She could not explain the reason for the teachers leaving.

Ken also thought the teacher turnover in his school was high and the departure decision was planned by some expatriate teachers. He said, *"there's a group that I've seen from within the school that either looks for new positions overseas or looks for new positions in Hong Kong. So, they stay overseas, but they don't go back to their home country, sometimes. They move around. So, seeing that was kind of interesting. And then there would be a group, kind of like myself, where we know we're coming to one place, commit to it, and then go home after. We knew, no matter what, if it was going to be one year or three years, we would be coming back to Canada after. There's no other country that we really wanted to go to after that."* Based on Ken's observation, it is worth noting that the high mobility of teachers in the same region or relocation to the others or going back home is sometimes planned.

Diana worked in different international schools both in Barbados and Hong Kong. She commented, *"Well, I feel like, in general, in international schools, the turnover is high compared to in private schools. But in both international schools I've worked in, one international school in Hong Kong and one*

international school in Barbados. And in both schools, it's kind of like there's a core set of teachers, the people who've been there for years and years and probably are going to stay for a long time. And then there's another set of teachers that seem to kind of come in, come out, maybe two years, four years, and then they move on. So, in comparison to public schools, the turnover is definitely high."

According to Diana, 25 to 30 percent of the teachers left in any given year. In addition, she noticed even though there was a high turnover rate, there was still a core group of teachers who worked for years and years. Another set of teachers seemed to come in and out and stayed for two or four years and then moved out.

In the opinion of Ella, the turnover rate of expatriate teachers used to be low around 2008 but it was rising due to the high cost of housing and she explained *"It used to be lower. Up until around 2008 it was actually low compared to other international destinations like Taiwan and China and the Middle East. But now it's rapid, now it's really bad. And the reason obviously is because, there's no chance to purchase a home here.* Ella attributed rising housing cost to the rising turnover.

Disagreement with the high turnover in the international schools

However, six respondents had different opinions on the issue of teacher turnover. They didn't agree that the teacher turnover was high in international schools. From their observations in their school, though some staff may leave, most of the staff chose to stay longer. Young teachers may be less likely to stay but it was very rare for teachers to work one contract only. Some respondents regarded the turnover rate was related to what type of school it was.

Dabria was working in an international school under the management of ESF. ESF is the largest international education operator in Hong Kong. According to Dabria, the staffing was quite steady and she explained, *"I would say every year there would be at least three to six teachers leaving and coming, new teachers. So, three or four is not very high."*

Sandra worked in different international schools in Hong Kong. They included German Swiss International School and South Island School. They are comparatively big international schools in Hong Kong. When she talked about the turnover rate for these schools, she said, *"I would say turnover is usually 10 to 15 percent, which I don't think is high. The school in Europe had a higher turnover. But I think that's because there were more people who went and stayed for two years or four years. Whereas here I found I've worked with people who've stayed a long time. So, I don't think - although you do still get turnover, but in a staff of 120, 10 people left at the end of the year, as I say, it's less than 10%. So I think that's normal."*

Sabrina also found some long service teachers in her school and said, *"I've got one that's been at the same school in West Island School for 14 years. And she has no intentions of leaving."* Sabrina also noted the teacher couples were likely to stay longer and said *"I think that international schools really love teaching couples because they're more likely to stay. Because if both spouses are committed to the same contract, then they stay."*

Rob also thought the turnover was quite low in his school. He said, *"From my observation, we have quite a low turnover. Quite a low turnover. I don't exactly know. We have a lot of teachers in our school, and I know some of them are with other people who are here, so I don't know the circumstances."* Though there is no actual data to support, from Rob's observation, the number of teachers leaving was not high.

Dane described the turnover phenomenon in his school as a turnover circle of every two to three years. He speculated the reasons and added *"I don't know if this is true or not, that my current employer seems to have a two-to three-year turnover. A lot of the hires seem to be right out of teachers' college, so. And on the international circuit, what I've noticed, if you're brand new out of teachers' college, you get two to three years under your belt that usually qualifies you to go to another*

system, or another country, or another school.” According to his explanation, young teachers who just graduated in their home country could have more choices of teaching in international schools elsewhere or going back home after teaching for 2 or 3 years. However, Dane did not think the turnover was high as these people might choose to stay and he explained, *“I think a lot of, especially, single individuals, if the income is good, the lifestyle's good, the travel's good, there are many pluses.”* According to Dane’s explanation, more teachers chose to stay than to leave.

Judy thought that turnover was not high in her school that is an ESF school. She said, *“My school, the turnover's not been so high lately, and if it is, it's really valid reasons like retirement or husband's moving, as opposed to people wanting to leave the school and leave Hong Kong.”*

Conflicting Judgements on whether the turnover in the international schools is high or not

Among the participants, over half of them, 9 respondents, claimed it was hard to judge if the teacher turnover was high or not in international schools. Some argued that high turnover existed in a particular school but not all. Some suggested only a particular group of teachers inclined to leave and young teachers had a high tendency of leaving. Some schools had a change of turnover from low turnover to high turnover but a particular school improved turnover rate after the school took some strategy to retain their teachers. Here are their clarifications of this complex issue.

Sachi supported that the high turnover did not exist in all schools and she said, *“Not in all schools. It's not that much of a turnover as in DSC (one of the schools she worked previously), it's not that much. Yes, there is a turnover. But not too bad or high. Tend to just change or 15 new teachers coming.”* She thought those schools with low turnover because they can offer good pay, good exposure, and learning opportunities to retain the teachers.

Zara also thought the turnover rate dependent on what kind of school it is. She said, *“If it is a top*

school, it's like top 10, top 5 schools, people would like to get in and maybe there are less opportunities. I mean, less chance for them to (have a high) turnover."

Jennifer also thought that the turnover rate in international schools was related to the school and staff and ESF schools had a stable retention. She said, *"I think it very much depends on the school. If it's a good school, people tend to stay. If the salaries are good, people will tend to stay. But also, it depends on the staff. A lot of staff members are quite young, and they want to travel the world. So, they may only want to do only one contract, save up some money, and go home or want to move on. It does seem to be a bit more stable in the ESF system."*

Barbie also thought the teacher turnover was related to staff. She explained, *"I would say yes and no. I feel like there's two groups of turnovers. There are people who are here for two to three years and they go home, and there's other people that are here for five to seven years and then they go home. So, I feel like those are the two groupings in my mind."*

Nancy admitted it was difficult to give an absolute answer of "yes or no" for high turnover but she distinguishes based on the age groups. She described, *"maybe 60% of the staff who had been there for a very long time, over 10 years, 10 to 20, and some even into 25 years. And the administrators have also been there about 25 years.... And then there was a selection of younger staff, like myself, who came in, and that had more of a high turnover tendency."* According to Nancy, younger staff have a higher tendency to leave but those who have a family in Hong Kong tend to be less likely to leave.

Ada commented that her school had a high turnover rate in some years but it has dropped. She described teachers leaving in a wave and added *"I feel like it goes in waves, some years it's bigger than others and so when I came, for example, 8 people were new to the school. The next year, it was over 30."* This wave of teachers' departure is probably due to the other comments that most of the

teachers at least complete 2 contracts of 4 years.

Katie thought the turnover rate of international school was higher when it is compared to the public school she taught before at Bristol and she said, *"I don't have anything to compare it to because I've never worked in a different international school. I would say, compared to a school back home, it's high, but it's probably different because it's an international school."*

Tiffany has relocated to Switzerland. She recalled that the turnover in her previous school in Hong Kong was quite standard with 9 to 13 people leaving each. However, she wondered whether more Australians who may be leaving as the salary was not so lucrative due to the change of exchange rate. She explained *"So for an Australian teacher now, for example, if I was an Australian teacher now because the dollar's a lot stronger and if you were looking at the work, the hot jobs in Hong Kong, you'd probably think quite closely about coming over to Hong Kong. And probably as a teacher I wouldn't go to Hong Kong unless I had a spouse who could also get a job in Hong Kong."*

Depends on how the school strategy to deal with the turnover

A particular teacher regarded that the teacher turnover can be improved by the school with an attractive benefit scheme. John worked in an international school of American Curriculum and noted the change of turnover due to the effort of the school to retain teachers. He explained *"Well, every year it (school bonus) goes up a percentage. So then once you have the fourth year, you might as well stay the next year because the fifth year you get a bonus for longevity, and the sixth year you get another two-year bonus, and then the seventh year you get residency. So they have you kind of locked up for seven years. They're quite smart. So my school had a big problem with turnover, however, they restructured this plan, and they're able to give some people some good benefits after two years, and opportunities."*

To round up, the occurrence of teacher turnover is normal in international schools as some expatriate teachers initially plan to stay shortly and then leave to go back home or work elsewhere. However, teacher turnover may be an issue in particular international schools in Hong Kong. From the opinions of the participants, if the schools are perceived as good places to work and also have a high reputation, their staff tend to stay more than to leave. According to them, the ESF schools do not have a high teacher turnover and some international schools have to try to retain their staff by giving more lucrative offers and benefits.

Satisfaction with teaching in Hong Kong

When the participants were asked in the questionnaire if they are satisfied with teaching in Hong Kong, 8 of them indicated “strongly agree” and the other 8 of them indicated “agree”, one indicated “undecided” and only one indicated “disagree”. Most of the survey respondents are satisfied with their work in Hong Kong and the mean is 4.2 ($S=0.87$). Another data also indicated that “Job Satisfaction” was the most significant turnover factors among the individual work-related variables turnover factor (see Table 5.4 in the Chapter 5). It is consistent with the finding from the interview. Almost all of them interpreted how they enjoyed teaching in Hong Kong except Dane.

Dane was the one dissatisfied with his present school leadership and he explained, *“The older I get, the more I really feel strongly about building people and building teams. And to be honest, the longer I stay with my current employer, the less and less I see that. So, I feel very frustrated at that, because our staff-- we have some amazing talent.... They're not encouraged to develop really innovative materials and, to be quite honest, they're not even really encouraged to take leadership positions within their team. So, I find that frustrating.”*

However, other participants were satisfied with teaching in their schools. Ada said she loved Hong Kong and the social life here. Sabrina also loved it and said *“I thought it was fantastic. I thought the*

students had great opportunities. I think that the teaching quality of the teachers was amazing in Hong Kong.” Rod also loved the teaching environment in Hong Kong and he commented, *“The kids are great. They're highly motivated. The parents are concerned”*.

Most of the teachers enjoyed teaching in Hong Kong. Sandy said, *“Teaching in any school is hard work. And it may be different stresses to the stresses in schools back in the UK. But it's a very rewarding job. A very tiring job, but one that I've really enjoyed.”* Katie also enjoyed her job in Hong Kong as there is less student issues and she commented *“the teaching side of things was very easy compared to teaching the behavior issues I have to deal with in my home country.”* Judy loved the school due to the closeness with colleagues and said *“To me, the enjoyment of school is closely connected to my colleagues and my friendships at school.”* Dianna enjoyed the professional growth opportunities and she explained *“I think, in terms of professional growth, it provides a lot of learning opportunities and a lot of ways that you can grow and expand.”* Tiffany highly commented her teaching school as *“fantastic”* and she said *“The leadership was great. The organization was very well-respected. And the students were wonderful to work with, always very interested in learning.”* Ken also praised his past school in Hong Kong and said *“the staff was so good. The office secretary was amazing. And it was a good team, easy team to join.”* Dabria loved to teach international school students and said, *“I felt that international school children are very open to talk, and they have a lot of ideas and visions, and a lot of different things which made me really interested to learn more about them.”*

From the above sharing of experiences, it is noted that most of the expatriate teachers enjoy teaching in Hong Kong overall. However, when they were asked if they planned to stay in Hong Kong. Among 19 interview participants, 5 of them had actually moved out of Hong Kong already. 11 out of 19 participants expressed their plan of working in other countries and the remaining 3 expressed

they may work in other countries. In other words, these expatriate teachers tend to leave no matter how long they have stayed or how they are satisfied with teaching in Hong Kong.

As discussed previously, individual non-work factors like family matters, change of spouse's career or personal pursuit for professional development force these expatriate teachers to leave their work in Hong Kong though most of them enjoy teaching here. The teacher turnover in international schools is common but it may not be a problematic issue in some schools with a good strategy and lucrative pay scale to retain their staff and the teachers themselves also enjoy teaching in Hong Kong.

Chapter 7: Discussions

In this study, a mixed method approach was used to look into three research questions below:

1. What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?
2. What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong?
3. What are the thoughts of teacher turnover from the experience of international school teachers in Hong Kong?

The findings of quantitative and qualitative data were presented in the previous last two chapters. In this chapter, it is going to organise the discussion based on the findings of three research questions.

Major push factors for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country

Look for better job opportunities

Regarding the factor for pushing teachers to leave their home country and work abroad, the finding from the quantitative result was consistent with the qualitative findings. Both findings suggest that “look for better job opportunities” is a major factor to push teachers to leave their home country and teach abroad.

The quantitative finding was supported and elaborated by the qualitative data from the interviews. It further reveals that there are fewer teaching opportunities or desirable teaching environments in some countries. Like in Canada, it is “very difficult to get full time teaching jobs” especially for young teachers. Teaching graduates might find supply teaching or short contracts but not a permanent full-time teaching job. In other countries like the United States, a change of teaching environment can push experienced teachers to work overseas. Two American teachers, John and Lagina, were

both influenced by school funding cuts. The school closure led John to work elsewhere and the funding cuts made Lagina lose her teaching position. The lack of good job opportunities pushes the teaching professionals to seek overseas job opportunity.

It is consistent with other global mobility research (Caravatti et al., 2014; Bense, 2016) that teaching professionals are high mobile professionals globally. One of the reasons perhaps is caused by the expansion of international schools worldwide. A growing demand for international school teachers across the world implies appealing overseas teaching prospects. From the experience of interviewees, they found it easy to get a job in international schools overseas. Among them, almost half of them mentioned the higher salary for teaching in international schools. According to the Global Report on the International School Market released by ISC Research in September 2018, there are 9605 English-medium international schools worldwide. The number of international schools increased by 6.3% in just one year (Golding, 2018). To compete for teaching professionals, international schools provide lucrative salary packages which motivate teachers to teach abroad. Hence, lucrative work opportunities in the world may motivate people to relocate. This phenomenon exists in international school teaching circuits.

Individual non-work variables: Opportunities to travel and adventure

The findings suggest that the job-related factor is a push factor to motivate teachers working abroad. However, from the qualitative data both from the open question in the survey and interviews, it is found that personal factors are leading the decision making. They include moving with the family, travel by teaching and paying off student loans. Among these individual non-work variables, this study suggests that a unique push factor “travelling and exploring the world” of expatriate teachers should be noted. It is in line with some previous studies (Odland and Ruzicka, 2009, Mancuso, 2010) which assert travelling is one of the high mobility predictors for international school teachers. “Teach to travel” a key factor for motivating teachers to teach overseas. To get paid to travel by

teaching abroad has become a popular option for Western English teachers to broaden their travel experience (Wilson, 2018; Jacobs, 2018; Howe, 2018). This supposition was substantiated by qualitative data as some interview participants at different ages also expressed travelling and exploration of the world was their reason for leaving home to teach overseas. For young teachers like Ada and Nancy, they wanted to “explore the world’ and “adventure-seeking” by teaching abroad. Ada added *“I wanted to travel, I wanted to explore the world and I didn’t want to do what all my friends were doing”*. A middle-aged teacher, Jennifer, described leaving Scotland as “a mid-life crisis” to pursue for a different life and teaching abroad allowed her to travel and said “they (schools) would pay me a salary that would allow me to travel because I was a young mom and didn’t get a chance to travel when I was younger”. As such, to travel and explore the world by teaching at overseas international schools has been a factor which motivated fresh teaching graduates to work abroad.

Both quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that the factor of “teach to travel” influenced international school teachers of different ages when they considered teaching at the overseas international schools. These findings complement previous studies by Odland and Ruzicka (2009) and Mancuso (2010). They both recognize that wanderlust is a unique characteristic of overseas international school teachers. This type of people who have a strong desire to travel and explore the world are called wanderlusters. The word “wanderlust” originates from German and this new term started to use in the early 20th Century to describe “a strong desire to travel” (Oxford, 2018). For those who want to travel abroad, teaching abroad is one of the popular jobs which offer the chances for travelling (Wilson, 2018). This can imply one group of international school teachers who wander from one country to another to fulfil their travelling dreams. Mancuso (2010) claims that travelling is one of the high mobility predictors. In other words, this type of teacher is more likely to be moving. The findings of the present study further enhance the previous studies that this phenomenon exists and pulls international school teachers to work abroad in detail. Mancuso (2010) relates the effect of wanderlust exists to a turnover factor. This will be further explored in the

later part regarding turnover factors.

Other individual non-work variables for leaving the home country

Apart from an incentive to travel and adventure, among the individual non-work variables, paying off student loans deserves us to note. Three respondents indicated this factor as their reason for leaving their home country. Teaching abroad is a quicker way to pay off student debts than to teach at their home country due to a higher salary (Birken, 2016; Dunsumore, 2018). Although the number of respondents is small, this reflects an actual financial difficulty for university graduates under growing education costs. This claim was supported by the comments from two teachers, Barbie and Diane. A Canadian young teacher, Barbie, explained *“in order to pay that off, I thought going abroad would be the best option for me”*. Barbadoes teacher, Diane, added *“I needed to pay off my student loans and my job (at home) wasn't really helping me get very far with that”*.

Better job opportunities with lucrative salary and benefits offered by international schools have become an attraction for young teaching graduates. They can travel in a new region, boost their resumes (Wilson, 2018) and earn more money to pay off their debts (Birken, 2016). This has become an incentive for them to leave their home country to teach overseas and also the conditions for them to choose their teaching destination.

Pull factors for teaching at international schools in Hong Kong

In the following part it is going to discuss the findings from the survey and interviews about the factors which pull the expatriate teachers to choose Hong Kong as their destination of teaching. As discussed above, a job-related factor i.e. “Opportunities for better jobs” is a major push factor to drive teachers to leave their home country. However, individual non-work factors including “desire to work and live in different cultures” (M=4.36, SD=1.04) and “Intercultural experience” (M=4.23, SD=0.98) were the main reason to pull these expatriate teachers to choose Hong Kong as their

destination. Nevertheless, in the qualitative data, almost half of the participants mentioned that a higher salary in terms of income package, low tax rate and higher currency exchange rate attracted them to work in Hong Kong. The individual non-work factors “desire to work and live in different cultures” and “Intercultural experience” are the third and fourth frequency in the quantitative data. Although the frequencies of quantitative data about the factors for moving to Hong Kong may not match with qualitative data, they still complement each other. From the qualitative data, it was identified how the factors “desire to work and live in different cultures” and “Intercultural experience” were interpreted by the respondents and how they inferred the factors of “salary” and “high compensation and benefits”.

As discussed in the Literature Review, the study of Chandler (2010) asserts that location is an important factor for international school teachers to determine their selection. From the qualitative data, it is found that expatriate teachers identified Hong Kong as a desirable place to work and live because it is an easy place for English speakers to get setup easily. They described *“It was really, really easy to get set up in Hong Kong, finding an apartment, getting utilities, and everything”, “I think it's a quite easy place to assimilate into, because of the language.”, “there was a big exposure community here, that there was some English spoken”*. For those who came to Hong Kong before 1997, the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong, they described “it was easier for an expatriate to come to Hong Kong and to get a working visa and get a job”.

Towards teachers working overseas, what they are concerned about is not just only the teaching environment but also their daily life environment. Hong Kong is a familiar place for expats due to its colonial historical background. Hong Kong was a British colony over 150 years from 1841 to 1997. Though it was back to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, the impacts of colony are still existing. For language, though Cantonese is a common spoken language in Hong Kong, English is still widely used in the government, professional, education and business sectors. Both Chinese and English are

official languages and used for traffic signs or direction signboards. Numerous streets have still been named British street names like Prince Edward Road, Oxford Road (Keegan, 2017). Apart from traditional Chinese festivals such as Mid-Autumn Festival, Lunar New Year, western festivals like Halloween, Christmas, and Western New Year are widely celebrated. Hong Kong is thus frequently described as a place where East meets West as it is a city with a mix of cultures and traditions of Chinese and western. The major population in Hong Kong is Chinese but the expat percentage of population of Hong Kong is one of the highest in the world. The expat community was up to around 395,000 (Connelly, 2014). Hong Kong is an easy place to live for English speakers and has a close expat community network to support and it is a good stepping stone for expatriate teachers to start their career in Asia.

As discussed previously, one of the factors to pull them to work overseas was the attractiveness of travelling. The good location and transport network of Hong Kong brings them a convenience for travelling and allows them to explore the South East Asia regions easily. They described *"Hong Kong is a more central location in the world", "good location in terms of travel, definitely", "had a good climate, and central"*. Some of them agreed the teaching life in Hong Kong allowed them to explore other countries easily, *"I don't know (how many countries I have travelled). Lots of South East Asia, Australia, yeah lots of places, too many places to mention."* *"this was a great way to see this part of the planet"*. Hong Kong is conveniently located for weekend gateways and its location allows the western teachers to explore different cultures in South East Asia. Location may be an influential factor for expatriate teachers to select their destination based on the study of Chandler (2010). Though it may not be a sole cause to motivate their move, it is a complement to add the values of their relocation.

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative results suggest that comparative high salary and high compensation and benefits offered by the international schools in Hong Kong are the important

factors to draw expatriate teaching professionals to teach in Hong Kong. When they considered their pay, the teachers evaluated their salary in its real value and coverage. They considered the currency rate, tax rate, and even bonus system. For instance, an Australian teacher described *“my wage effectively tripled in the amount I was going to be making if I was converting back to Australian dollars. And the tax rate in Hong Kong was very low compared to Australia.”* A Scotland teacher commented *“what I didn't realize was the tax rate was lower (in Hong Kong) and then the bonus system and the housing. That all made a massive difference. But now I'm more than double what I had as a promoted teacher in the UK.”* In Hong Kong, individuals are taxed at progressive rates i.e. 2%, 7%, 12% and 17% on their net chargeable income or at a standard rate of 15% on the net income, whichever is lower (GovHK, 2018). Hong Kong taxes are the lowest in the world. It can maintain a low tax rate policy because *“the government has huge fiscal reserves equivalent to more than 12 months of expenditure. The interest received on these reserves is a crucial source of revenue, and helps keep the tax burden light”* (Davis, 2019:1) and makes Hong Kong become a tax-free shopping heaven though this external incentive can be changed with the economic situation.

It is consistent with the previous studies (Mancuso, 2010; Sieling, 2012) that salary incentives are an appealing pull factor to draw expatriate teachers. However, the findings here also show that teachers actually consider the real value of salary. Schools may improve their salary or bonus scheme to attract the teachers but some external factors may be out of the control like the currency exchange rate and tax rate.

Other pull factors for moving to Hong Kong are job-related factors like better working conditions with *“a good school system in Hong Kong”, “work at a Tier 1 school”,* more job opportunities with extracts of *“good market here in Hong Kong. There are a lot of international schools.”*, and international schools in Hong Kong provide opportunities of professional development and different curricula *“a lot of professional development opportunities over weekends. But more informal or interschool*

professional development". These extracts identify Hong Kong as a desirable place to start off their career on the international school circuit. The education quality of Hong Kong is highly recognized. In addition to the local public schools, a variety of international schools have long been established to offer different national curricular such as American International School, Australian International School, Canadian International School, German Swiss International School and the schools of English Schools Foundation. In these few years, some historical renowned school operators also developed their international schools in Hong Kong including Malvern College Hong Kong and Shrewsbury International School Hong Kong opening in 2018 and Wycombe Abbey School in 2019, Kent College in 2020 (Allan, 2019). With the growth of international schools in Hong Kong, there is a wider choice of teaching opportunities for expatriate teachers to start off their international teaching career.

To conclude, the results find that expatriate teachers choosing Hong Kong as their destination are related to both organizational factors like "salary", "income package", "professional development" and individual factors including "desire to work and live in different cultures" and "intercultural exchange" opportunities because Hong Kong is an easy place for expatriates and a great base for exploring South East Asia and start off their career path on international school circuit. However, these teaching professionals may continue to move along the international circuit for career advancement or work in other countries to explore the world. This study moves on looking into the important factors which may cause these expatriate international school teachers to stay or leave Hong Kong.

Factors of teacher turnover

In the current study, Mobley's (1982) Model of Causes and Correlates of Turnover is supplemented with the Push and Pull Theory to identify the factors about the decision of turnover from the perspective of expatriate teachers. Based on this model, the factors which may lead expatriate international teachers to leave were classified into four areas 1. the state of economy 2. organizational

variables 3. individual non-work variables and 4. individual job-related variables.

Family Matters are the most influential factor to determine expatriate teacher turnover

Both quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that individual non-work variables: Family matters influence most on the decision for these expatriate teachers to leave Hong Kong. This factor was explored further with qualitative data. From the experience of interview participants, we can better understand what and how family matters influence their turnover decision.

For those who have settled down in Hong Kong, taking care of the elderly or reunion with family is a force to make them leave. Sabrina raised this concern in the interview and said “my mom was quite elderly, and she was sick. And I wanted to go home and spend some quality time with her.” Ada wanted to reunite with the family and friends at home after a long period of time working overseas, “The biggest reason is friends and family back home, feeling like you're missing out or you're not there for people when you need to be there”.

For the married participants, a change of spouse’s job is a common factor to give up their own career like Katie who said *“If there was a good job opportunity for him somewhere else because my job is quite movable as being a teacher”*. But for a single young teacher, relationships at home is the cause, for example, Barbie valued relationships more than money, “So I had to weigh what was more important to me, money or the relationship, and I chose the relationship.”

Individual non-work variables are highly related to the turnover tendency for international school teachers. This is consistent with the claim of Mobley (1982) who asserts “an individual’s decision to quit a job involves not only an evaluation of the current and possibly future jobs within and outside the organization, but also an evaluation of such non-work variables as family, leisure preferences, life style, etc” (Mobley, 1982:108). Studies about teacher turnover try to explore the influence of

personal factors on turnover, for example, Cambridge (2002) claims a strong connection between turnover and individual characteristics. His study also identifies the relationship between personal characteristics and turnover. One of the classifications is career professionals with families. This type of teachers is motivated by the family concerns more and this influences their retention decision also. Nonetheless, they are incompetent to illustrate what exactly personal factor the respondent referred to and how much they value that. This study is able to demonstrate what and how family matters influenced them in their retention decision. Additionally, it is worth noting that these teaching professionals are very confident that they are able to find jobs in other countries due to their teaching experience and worldwide recognized qualifications. They believe the departure may not influence their future job opportunities.

Living condition and safety are also a force to lead expatriates to leave currently

This study reveals that a living condition is also a force to lead expatriate teachers to leave. Though expatriate teachers have a higher salary and house allowance, those who currently moved in still find it hard to afford the expensive rents in the city. The other factor is the concern about air quality in Hong Kong.

The quantitative finding suggests that, the factor “cost of living and living conditions” is the concern for particular teachers (only 7 respondents) especially for those who just moved to Hong Kong in these 4 years. They illustrated how housing price discouraged them to stay in the interviews. Here are their voices:

“Cost of living in Hong Kong isn't expensive. Housing is expensive. Yes, without a doubt. Number one reason for me, and anybody I know that I work with, is going to say that the cost of having to pay so much money to have a house, and even the size of the house for what you pay for, is so prohibitive.”

“the cost of living is significantly higher here than it is in the US”

“massive inflation booms in Hong Kong, especially in property but actually across all sectors”

Hong Kong property market is rated as the world’s most unaffordable (Global Property Guide, 2018). The lack of affordable housing in Hong Kong has long been criticized and a sore point for the public in Hong Kong (SCMP, 2017). From the findings, we note that expatriate international school teachers get a high pay but still find hard to afford it. High cost of housing reduces their actual income if they did not have a property in Hong Kong.

Though in the survey, just only very few participants (11 out of 94) were concerned about the safety of environment but the air pollution can be a force to discourage the expatriate teachers to stay. One of the interview participants from the Scotland made it clear that she would not stay if her health was suffering from the air pollution. Another participant from the United States was also determined to say “the pollution is one big reason I would leave’. Air pollution poses a health risk to residents. According to the Hedley Environmental Index, only 150 days in 2017 were considered to be free from pollution or clear in Hong Kong (Chiu, 2018). Hong Kong was ranked 28th in expat liveability ranking because of poor air quality (Yeung, 2018). This threatens expatriate international school teachers with a higher health concern if the air quality cannot be improved. Perhaps, high housing cost and poor air quality may not be an issue for the expatriate teachers to consider before they move in but these may directly affect their quality of life after they are actually living here.

Factors of teacher turnover – Job Satisfaction and Career Advancement

From the quantitative finding, among top 5 influential turnover factors, 4 of them were job related. They included “Job satisfaction” (M=3.37, SD=1.44), “Recognition and support from administration” (M=3.29, SD=1.43), “Administrative leadership” (M=3.20, SD=1.43) and “Autonomy or control over your own work” (M=3.10, SD=1.40). It is consistent with the model of Mobley (1977) that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are major antecedents of turnover intentions and a number of studies which support a negative relationship between overall satisfaction and turnover

(Mobley, 1982; Griffith, 2004; Chandler, 2010).

When we look at the responses about job satisfaction, most of the survey respondents were satisfied with their work in Hong Kong. However, from the qualitative data, it is found that actually three respondents were not quite satisfied. One of them shared her unpleasant at the interview *"I always felt the second citizen treatment there"*. The other interview participant, Ken, who returned to Canada already, was also dissatisfied with the job arrangement for his first two years of teaching in Hong Kong and explained *"I wanted to make sure that I was teaching PE, physical education. That's what I was qualified for. That's what I wanted to do. And the first two years, I wasn't able to get into it"*. This finding is corresponding to what Mancuso claims in his study (2010) that faculty perceptions of input of decision making is one of the teacher turnover predictors.

Compared to job satisfaction, more participants attributed their consideration of quit to their career aspirations and expectations. Two respondents considered this as the motive to move further and said: *"So if I get a chance to study further or work on the professional field, I would take a chance, definitely, to move out"* *"I would like to pursue a PhD, which I would have to do in Canada."* As discussed previously, better job opportunities and professional development motivate these teaching professionals to work overseas. The finding supports that some teaching professionals may continue to move further along the international circuit for career advancement.

To round up, the individual non-work variables like family matters and living conditions are highly related to turnover tendency for international school teachers sometimes more than job related factors. As Mobley commented, "an individual's decision to quit a job involves not only an evaluation of the current and possibly future jobs within and outside the organization, but also an evaluation of such nonwork variables as family, leisure preferences, lifestyle, etc." (Mobley, 1982:108) and he criticized that the relationship between individual non-work related variables and turnover

are often neglected. This study is able to illustrate what individual non-work factors influence the turnover decision.

Issue of teacher turnover

The last research question is to reveal the issue of teacher turnover in international schools from the teacher perspectives. The quantitative finding indicates that the majority of participants were satisfied with teaching in Hong Kong. However, 41 out of 94 (44.68%) indicated they would plan to work in other countries apart from their home country. This quantitative result suggests that international school teachers have a high tendency to leave their teaching job in Hong Kong even though they are satisfied with their work in Hong Kong.

When we look at the issue of teacher turnover from the quantitative finding, 37.23% of participants agreed that teacher turnover was high in international schools in Hong Kong and even 17% participants strongly agreed with this. This implies high teacher turnover is a phenomenon in international schools in Hong Kong. However, it seems that this may not happen in all international schools since 32.98% participants regarded that turnover rate was not high in their serving schools.

This contradiction was explained in the qualitative finding. Based on the opinions of interview participants, only 4 teachers out of 19 agreed the teacher turnover was high but 6 of them disagreed that. More than half, 9 said it is undecided to comment on whether the teacher turnover was high or not. It seems that the extent of teacher turnover is different in different schools. However, from their elaboration in the interviews we can conclude the following phenomena related to the teacher turnover:

1. High teacher turnover rate depends on the school

High teacher turnover in international schools is regarded as a common issue in international schools

and one of the features of international schools (Cambridge, 2002; Hayden, 2006; Odland and Ruzicka, 2009; Tarry, 2011). However, in this study, it is found that high turnover exists in a particular school but not from the perspective of all participants. Some schools which were described as “top”, “bigger”, or “good” can retain teachers successfully and the turnover rate is quite stable.

Here are the extracts of some responses:

“I think some schools, definitely, yeah. It depends what the school's like.”

“If it is a top school, it's like top 10, top 5 schools... less chance for them to (have a high) turnover.

But maybe it's not a top school, the teachers will like to move, to seek for a better career.”

“I think it very much depends on the school. If it's a good school, people tend to stay. it does seem to be a bit more stable in the ESF system. I don't know if it's because of the salary or the conditions.”

“Actually, the turnover isn't that high with a lot of the bigger schools.”

From their interpretations, the teacher turnover rate in good schools or top schools is low. One example they mentioned was the schools in the ESF system in which a lot of teachers stayed longer. Some believed it was due to its income scheme or professional development opportunities. This deserves a further investigation.

2. Turnover intention depends on teachers

This study confirmed what previous studies by Odland and Ruzicka (2009) and Mancuso (2010) have discovered about “wanderlust” factors. Teachers with the intention of wanderlust “were more likely to be moving regardless of how they feel about their salary, school leadership or other predicting factors” (Mancuso, 2010, p. 91). The results indicated the existence of wanderlusters among the international school teachers. For them, travelling and exploring the world is one of the motives to draw international school teachers to work overseas. These teachers also have a high tendency to

leave and move on working in other countries for career advancements. Qualitative findings support the idea that there are different groups of expatriate teachers even in the same school. One group is a core group who are satisfied with living in Hong Kong and the other group of teachers just work in Hong Kong for a few years and then leave. Here are some extracts of the explanations.

“There's a group that I've seen from within the school that either looks for new positions overseas or looks for new positions in Hong Kong. So, they stay overseas, but they don't go back to their home country, sometimes. They pop around”

“And in both schools, it's kind of like there's a core set of teachers, the people who've been there for years and years and probably are going to stay for a long time. And then there's another set of teachers that seem to kind of come in, come out, maybe two years, four years, and then they move on.”

“I would say yes and no. I feel like there's two groups of turnovers. There's people who are here for two to three years and they go home, and there's other people that are here for five to seven years and then they go home.”

Based on the explanation of Ingersoll (2001), “teachers’ decisions whether to stay or leave the teaching professional are related to their age” (p.502). Younger teachers have very high rates of departure. The middle-aged tend to settle down and the turnover rate rises again in retirement years. He claimed teacher turnover follows a pattern of U-shaped curve. The findings of the study support this claim that young single teachers have a higher tendency of leaving. The following are the extracts elaborated by interview participants about the turnover phenomenon of young teachers.

“younger staff are a little less likely to stay”

“there was selection of younger staff, like myself, who came in, and that had more of a high turnover tendency”

“A lot of the hires seem to be right out of teachers' college, so. And on the international circuit, what I've noticed, if you're brand new out of teachers' college, you get two to three years under

your belt, that usually qualifies you to go to another system, or another country, or another school.”

3. 10-15 % turnover is normal

In the study, there are different opinions of whether the turnover is high or not. Some participants cannot decide that as they were not able to judge what rate is high or not just based on their observation. In Hong Kong, turnover rates for teachers in the local schools are rather low, 4.2% for primary trained teachers and 4.7% for secondary trained teachers over the year 2018-2019 (EDB, 2019a). In the United States, the statewide teacher turnover rate was 14.84% that was regarded as an unacceptable rate (Chaffin, 2015) and a national crisis already (Hunt and Carroll, 2003). However, the turnover rate tends to be high in international schools, for instance, in the study of Odland and Ruzicka (2009), it indicated there were 3193 teachers left from the total population of 22, 098 in 270 international schools and the turnover rate was 14.4 per cent.

In this study, it is found that the international school teachers inclined to accept the situation of teachers leaving probably because most of the international schools in Hong Kong are expatriate. From their perspective, 10 to 15 per cent or a couple of teachers leaving and coming is normal in the international schools.

“I would say every year there would be at least three to six teachers leaving and coming, new teachers. So, three or four is not very high.”

“I would say turnover is usually 10 to 15 percent, which I don't think is high. The school in Europe had a higher turnover” and she mentioned, “there was a group of teachers who work for long in the schools,”

“I would say, compared to a school back home, it's high, but it's probably different circumstances because it's an international school.”

4. Other factors influence on turnover rate

As Mobley (1982) claims, “the more use of professional reward criteria was perceived, the lower the turnover was” (p. 100). This is reflected from one of the sharing which recognized how the school adjusted their strategy including the reward system to retain their teachers.

“My school had a big problem with turnover, however, they restructured this plan, and they're able to give some people some good benefits after two years, and opportunities. However, the turnover at my school is medium, and I think it was before very, very high. But I think they made that change in benefits to really try to keep the teachers.... What they have done is every two years you get a bonus. The second year you get a bonus. The fourth year you get a bonus. So then.”

Salary and benefits strategy seem to be an effective way to retain the teachers to stay longer.

Another strategy for the schools to retain staff is to employ teaching couples. As explained by one of the interview participants, *“I think that international schools really love teaching couples because they're more likely to stay. Because if both spouses are committed to the same contract, then they stay.”* said Sabrina. It is supported by what Hardman (2001) claims, teaching couples are more likely to extend their contract if the conditions are suitable for their family. Zilber (2005) elaborated this phenomenon caused by free or discounted tuition for their children and it is a major incentive for these parent-educators to stay.

However, some respondents mentioned about the external threats like higher housing rent and lower exchange rates may cause Hong Kong not an attractive place to live and work.

“Now it's (turnover rate's) really bad. And the reason obviously is because, there's no chance to purchase a home here. They can't buy a house here. So that's why they left.”

“So, for an Australian teacher now, for example, if I was an Australian teacher now because the

dollar's a lot stronger and if you were looking at the work, the hot jobs in Hong Kong, you'd probably think quite closely about coming over to Hong Kong. And probably as a teacher I wouldn't go to Hong Kong unless I had a spouse who could also get a job in Hong Kong."

As stated in the literature review, Chandler (2010) asserts that the location is weakly connected to the decision to leave and the location satisfaction is less influential compared to job satisfaction. However, the finding of this study does not support this claim since the condition of the location like the high rent can influence the expatriate to consider leaving from the experience of these expatriates in Hong Kong. In the study, 3 teachers indicated that they were concerned more about the cost of housing in Hong Kong than their job satisfaction. They were satisfied with their teaching jobs in Hong Kong but feel unaffordable to live. Housing costs keep rising in this decade in Hong Kong and these teachers were those who just moved to Hong Kong in these 4 years and thus suffered from the cost of housing. This social problem probably influences not just the expatriate teacher retention but also the future recruits of overseas teachers. Perhaps future research could examine the association of turnover with the external threats like high rental price or the safety of Hong Kong.

5. Nature of turnover

Turnover can lead to potentially positive and/or negative consequences from the individual perspectives (Mobley, 1982). In this study, it is found that turnover occurred for these international school teachers due to voluntary rather than involuntary reasons like being laid off by the school. From their sharing, we can conclude that turnover actually brought them positive consequences including reunion with the family, pursuit for career advancement, or exploration of the world. It seems leaving did not bring them obvious negative consequences like the loss of financial support or benefits. As Kate explained, *"teaching job is quite movable as being a trained teacher. There's quite a lot of opportunity for me in different places"*. Lack of promotional opportunities may lead to the turnover. However, for this international teaching professional, on the contrary, their movement

was due to availability of promotional opportunities in the global education market. Thus, their turnover is more likely to have potentially positive consequences.

To round up, the occurrence of teacher turnover is normal in international schools. Expatriate teachers initially plan to stay shortly and then leave to go back home or work elsewhere. From the findings we know most of the respondents enjoyed teaching in Hong and some teachers stayed longer than they initially planned to. Based on the survey responses more than half of the respondents stayed more than 6 years. However, individual non-work factors like family matters, change of spouse's career or personal pursuit for professional development or housing problem force these expatriate teachers to leave their work in Hong Kong. To retain these expatriates, some international schools have tried to retain their staff by giving more lucrative offers and professional development opportunities. The brand of top schools is a kind of attraction to the teaching professionals. Comparably, they can have a stable teacher retention. Actually, for the individual perceptive, turnover of international school teachers tends to have positive consequences.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

The issue of teacher turnover in the international schools is regarded as a common phenomenon. The decision of staying or leaving can be caused by the interplay of multiple factors (Mobley, 1982). This study aims at looking into the factors to cause the mobility of international school teachers and the teacher turnover in the international schools in Hong Kong from teacher perspectives analyzed based on two theoretical frameworks. One is Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, AFT, 2009), and the other is Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (1982). Two frameworks were used because the turnover of international school teachers involves not just simply leaving a job but leaving a particular location to another country or home country. This is related to two aspects: factors motivating them to teach overseas and what factors causing them to leave again. Thus, the Push and Pull theory guided the research to explore factors which pushed expatriate teachers to work abroad and factors which pulled them to choose to work in Hong Kong. The other framework, Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover was used to explore the reasons for causing expatriate teachers to determine their departure in consideration of four general classes: "external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work related variables" (Mobley, 1982, p.78).

In this study, it tries to explore the following research questions:

1. What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?
2. What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong?
3. What are the thoughts of teacher turnover from the experience of international school teachers in Hong Kong?

This study shows that better job opportunities are the most driving force to motivate these expatriate international school teachers to work abroad. From the interviews, participants explained how hard it is for young Canadian teachers to get a full-time teaching job in Canada and how the education funding cuts in the United States motivated American teachers to teach away from home. At the same time, some teachers seek for a better teaching environment and professional development in the expanding market of international schools. Another push factor “travelling and exploring the world” is a cultural factor to drive international teachers to work overseas. This confirms the existence of wanderlust factors. Though there are many international schools globally, international school teachers chose Hong Kong as their destination because they regarded Hong Kong as a desirable and convenient place for both working and living. It is also a travelling gateway to explore different cultures. Additionally, international schools in Hong Kong which offer competitive income packages and professional development make Hong Kong a desirable stop on the international school circuit.

The findings reveal that the majority of international school teachers were very satisfied with their teaching life in Hong Kong and some of them stayed in Hong Kong longer than their initial plan. However, the findings also show that the occurrence of teacher turnover is still common in international schools compared to the local schools but the turnover rate is comparatively lower in the top schools. As Mobley (1982) states, “turnover may not be caused by a single determinant but a multiple of determinants but ultimately, it is an individual behaviour” (p. 79). The responses of the participants also imply their complex of considerations involving individual, external and/or organization variables. Among these factors, individual non-work variables e.g. family matters are still the most influential to influence their decision of leaving or staying. This finding is in accord with the results of previous studies of staff turnover that turnover is highly correlated to the individual characteristics (Cambridge, 2002, Elfers, et al., 2006). Another individual non-work variable, living condition, is worthy to note. The rising housing cost influences their retention decision and is pushing the expatriate teachers to consider moving out. It is contradicting to the previous study like

Chandler (2010) which asserted that the location satisfaction is less influential compared to job satisfaction.

Implications of the Study

Exploration of complex determinant of the issue of teacher turnover

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the phenomenon of teacher turnover in international schools is assumed but not well explored. On the contrary, much of the literature about teacher turnover in public schools is from the US and other countries due to the high teacher turnover rate and its associated negative impacts on students, schools and/or staying teachers. Ample research tries to look for the reasons of the teacher departure in public schools. However, they tend to focus on particular factors like the relationship to the policy (Cho, 2005), school conditions (Ezzeldine, 2004), financial incentive to retain teachers (Brooks and Hill, 2004) or personal characteristics (Ingersoll, 2001) perhaps based on the researcher's interest. Thus, this paper sheds new lights on examining all-inclusive factors based on Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover. The Mobley's Model was used to explore the reasons for causing expatriate teachers to determine their departure in this study. From the sharing of participants, it is found that the thoughts of teachers' leaving and resignation are actually a function of multiple factors in both personal and organization and even external factors like economy and cultural concerns. Each of the variables examined under the Mobley's model offers better understanding of the complex determinants of teacher turnover and mobility.

Neglected Community of Non-Corporate Expatriates

Additionally, this study unveils the motives of expatriate teachers to work at overseas international schools. As Bunnell (2017) describes, teachers in international schools as a "neglected community of non-corporate expatriates" (p. 194) although the international school market continues to expand globally and it is predicted to reach 11,000 international schools in 2024 (Custer, 2014) and other

global mobility studies like Caravatti et al., 2014; Bense, 2016 identify that teaching professionals are high mobile professionals globally. The realities about the life of expatriate teachers are still largely neglected like what Bunnell (2017) commented, “we still know very little about their motivation to teach overseas” (p. 197). However, this study ascertains that looking for job opportunities is the main push factor to motivate expatriate teachers to teach overseas. Another unique push factor is “travelling and exploring the world”. These factors may be observed in international school circuits in general but the present study identifies the phenomenon by both quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Attempt to understand the reason of departure of international school teachers in Hong Kong

Moreover, there is also paucity of literature in the context of international schools in Hong Kong as “this sector is widely seen as diverse and outside the mainstream” in Hong Kong (Bray and Yamato, 2003, p.70). Though there were few studies about international schools in Hong Kong, they tended to focus on education and teaching and learning (McLeod Mok, 2009; Shaw, 2010; Ngan, 2013;). Since little has been written about international school teachers in Hong Kong, the significance of this research is able to fill this knowledge gap and provide more understanding of this group of expatriate teachers in Hong Kong and attempt to better understand the situation of teacher turnover from the lens of teachers. This study informs us that most of the international school teachers are satisfied with their teaching life in Hong Kong and stay longer than their initial plan. Most of them choose Hong Kong as their destination due to its geographical and cultural attractions. The individual factors “desire to work and work in different cultures” and “intercultural experience” pull them to teach here. The time when the data was collected, those expatriate teachers identified Hong Kong as a desirable place to work and live and they described “it is an easy place for English speakers to get setup easily” and “it was easier for an expatriate to come to Hong Kong and to get a working visa”. Expatriate teachers find Hong Kong a good location to explore the South East Asia regions easily and a good stepping stone to start their career in Asia. The attraction of location and the motive of

travelling can be a factor to motivate international school teachers to further explore in other regions.

The use of Mixed Methods to enhance the validity of the research

Regarding the research methods, most of the teacher turnover studies were conducted by quantitative methods like Fong (2018) with a sample size of 116 international school teachers to answer the survey. Qualitative research was not commonly employed for the study of teacher turnover. Currently, Dos Santos (2019) used the qualitative research method to investigate the causes of international school teachers' leaving but the sample size was comparatively small with 6 Australian participants from one international school in Fuji. However, the current study is able to recruit a number of 94 participants from 25 different international schools with 12 diverse nationalities and 19 participants to do the follow-up interviews as well. Actually, it is not easy to seek voluntary participants because international schools in Hong Kong are highly independent institutions in nature and the teacher turnover is a sensitive issue. The mixed research methods and diverse nationality teachers from different schools can enhance the validity of the findings as the issue of teacher turnover can be explored in different schools and different nationalities.

This research tried to explore the teacher mobility and turnover issue with an attempt to get a true understanding of the situation by combining different ways of looking at it. A mixed method approach was used to collect the data – this was a combination of quantitative data collected by an online survey and qualitative data by doing in-depth interviews. It was believed to enhance the validity of the findings by triangulating different methods in the combination of method triangulation (different ways of looking at it) and data triangulation (different findings) (Silverman, 2013). In this study, a quantitative online survey was conducted first. The quantitative survey identified mobility and turnover factors and significance of turnover issues statistically. These quantitative findings were elaborated and further explained by the qualitative data from the in-depth interviews. The quality of the research was assured with the reliability of the research methods and the validity of

the results. Both results are consistent with each other and echo the previous findings. For instance, “wanderlust” factor suggested by Odland and Ruzicka (2009) and Mancuso (2010) was further explored in this study in detail. As commented by Mancuso (2010) himself, this factor was not deeply explored in his study as a single method was used. However, in this study, the existence of wanderlust factor was revealed in both quantitative and qualitative findings. Additionally, the qualitative research method allowed these teachers to interpret how they would like to get paid to travel by teaching abroad.

The possibility of applying the findings in other contexts

Though the present study is exploring the teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong, perhaps its findings can probably be applied to other contexts since the findings are consistent with the research of international schools in other regions.

First, travelling to explore different cultures can be one of the high mobility predictors to draw expatriate teachers to work in Hong Kong but also cause them to leave further. It was identified in the research of Mancuso (2010) which explored the issue of teacher turnover in 578 American overseas schools in South East Asia. Mancuso suggested that teachers with the intention of wanderlust “were more likely to be moving regardless of how they feel about their salary, school leadership or other predicting factors” (p. 91). The research of Dos Santos (2019) also recognizes the desire to share the intercultural experience as a factor to motivate 6 Australian teachers to teach at an international school in Fiji. Hence, it is believed that cultural exploration is a factor which can explain why international school teachers like to teach overseas.

Second, the present study finds that individual non-work variables like family and living conditions are the major attributes to their departure. However, some expat teachers stayed much longer than their initial plan. It implies that some international schools in Hong Kong are able to retain their

teachers by their strategical pay scheme and the chance of professional development. These findings likewise are in line with the findings of recent research in other regions. For instance, John (2018) investigated an international school in Thailand and concluded that applicable professional development is one of the organization factors to promote job satisfaction and teacher retention at international schools. Menard (2020) also identified no raise of salaries and benefits can be a core factor to push international school teachers in Brazil to leave. Hence, though the present study is based on the setting of international school teachers in Hong Kong, the findings of it can reflect the possible characteristics of the turnover issue of international school teachers in different contexts.

Research Limitations

Although the present study has generated findings which have its theoretical and contextual implications, its research design may have its potential limitations. For instance, the target group of the study was international teachers. The study examined the reasons of teacher mobility and the issue of teacher turnover from the teacher perspective only. It might lack the support of actual turnover data from the schools or ignore the interpretation from the perspective of schools or school administration. One of the major reasons for using one data source is the difficulty of getting the data from the international schools. As mentioned previously, international schools are private sector and highly independent institutions in nature. Without a strong connection with the school administration, it is not easy to collect the data about teacher turnover which might be considered as a sensitive question. In consideration of survey return rate, feasibility and cost of time, the researcher of the present study just focused on collecting the data from a single source i.e. the teachers only. Perhaps future research could examine the issue of teacher turnover from the school perspective if the researcher has a strong connection with the school administration.

Additionally, this study analyzed the issue of teacher mobility and teacher turnover based on two theoretical frameworks - Model of turnover and Push and Pull theory and Model of turnover to

explore the possible factors which influence the mobility and turnover intention. The full range of factors in their decision to move abroad or move further may be too comprehensive and hence the findings could not be very conclusive. Actually, there is a potential of using both frameworks to develop as a new model to investigate the concepts of international school teacher turnover. It was not further explored due to the time constraint and the workload involved when using the mixed methods. It is admitted that the mixed research methods can help enhance the validity of the findings. However, using two different research methods also implies double work no matter the research design, the collection of data, learning how to analyze the data, actual analysis and comparison of data. It took longer time and effort to complete. Hopefully, the present study can serve a basis for further study in developing a new teacher turnover model.

On the other hand, the importance of factors might be changed due to time and social and even political conditions. The data of the present study were collected in 2017-2018, at that time, the safety of Hong Kong was not regarded as an influential turnover factor. The respondents did not question about the safety in Hong Kong. However, the safety of Hong Kong was challenged by a series of violent clashes between protesters and police force starting June 2019. The government's proposal of the Extradition Bill to mainland China sparked Hong Kong's protests in general and over millions of citizens participated in the demonstrations to fight against the bill. Though the bill was withdrawn finally after three months, clashes between police and activists have become increasingly violent (BBC, 2019). It was described as "the worst political crisis since the handover to China in 1997" (South China Morning Post, 2019). These social and political changes threaten the safety of Hong Kong and may catalyze the expatriates to move out of Hong Kong but this gives a new possibility for future research.

Conclusion

International school teachers offer a rich range of research with its unique characteristic. As Bense (2016) comments, this group of teaching professionals is regarded as one of the most mobile professionals in the global education market. This study tries to explore the factors of their mobility and the issue of turnover through a mixed method research guided by two theoretical frameworks – Push and Pull theory (Lee, 1966, AFT 2009) and Mobley’s Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover (Mobley, 1982). It is consistent with a lot of migration research. The main push factor to cause them to leave home is lack of desirable job opportunities in their home country. Both organization factors like “salary” and individual factors including “desire to work and live in different cultures” and “intercultural exchange” pulled them to choose Hong Kong as their teaching destination.

Regarding the turnover rate in the international schools in Hong Kong, most of the participants regard that it is so different among the schools. Some high-ranking elite schools were successful in retaining their staff with benefits and/or development strategies. However, the research finds that teacher turnover rate in international schools in Hong Kong is still comparatively higher than the local schools. Though some of the expatriate teachers stayed much longer than they initially planned. In some cases, they were even granted permanent citizenship, perhaps one day, they will still move away to return home or continue their journey on the international school circuit to explore their life and career advancement. Teacher migration is the unique characteristic of this group of professionals. However, the schools can still retain them temporarily with lucrative benefits or professional development.

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Appendix 1 – GSoE Research Ethics Form

Name(s): Wong Kit Ming

Proposed research project: "Goodbye Hong Kong: Teacher Turnover in International Schools in Hong Kong"

Proposed funder(s): NIL

Discussant for the ethics meeting: Emil Li

Name of supervisor: Dr. Lisa Lucas

Has your supervisor seen this submitted draft of your ethics application? Yes

Please include an outline of the project or append a short (1 page) summary:

The purpose of this study is to identify the significance of the issue of teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong and to explore factors affecting expatriate teachers to decide to stay or leave. Two concepts will lead the direction of this paper. One is the Push and Pull Model (Lee, 1966). This will be used to identify the factors associated with Hong Kong. It will look into what factors which lead the expatriate teachers to leave their international school teaching job in Hong Kong or hold them to stay. In addition to Push and Pull Model, Mobley's Model of the Causes and Correlates of Turnover frames the factors of turnover and guides the exploration of what and how expatriate international school teachers consider when they decide to stay or leave in term of external economy, organizational variable, individual non-work variables and individual work-related variables.

The subjects of the study are expatriate teachers working in the international schools in Hong Kong as the expatriate teachers usually are the group which stay temporarily in Hong Kong. Mixed methods are employed - a questionnaire survey and then in-depth interviews. It is planned to reach 100 -150 expatriate teachers for completing the questionnaire and have the in-depth interviews with around 10 expatriate using convenience sampling of whoever agrees to be interviewed. The research questions are:

1. What are the motivations for expatriate international teachers to leave their home country and choose to teach in Hong Kong?
2. What are the perceptions of international teachers on the factors which might lead them to stay or leave their job in Hong Kong?
3. What are the thoughts of teacher turnover from the experience of international school teachers in Hong Kong?

Ethical issues discussed and decisions taken (see list of prompts overleaf):

1. Researcher access/ exit

- I will access adult participants only.
- The survey and interviews will be conducted on a voluntary basis.
- I will terminate the interviews if I feel there is a potential conflicts to ethics like bringing the unpleasant feeling or negative impacts to the participants.
- Participants can choose not to answer if there is any potential conflict or sensitive information about their serving schools.
- Permissions will be asked from schools if there is any potentially confidential or sensitive information about the schools.

2. Information given to participants

- For the electronic survey, a description of the study is stated before the start of the survey. Participants are given the purpose of the survey, their rights of withdrawal, the concerns of confidentiality involved including no identification of the individual personal information and their school and the data retention.



Cover letter for the
questionnaire.docx

- For the interviews, a consent to participate in the interview will be given to the participants. It includes the Introduction and Purpose of the research; Procedures of the interviews; Benefits; Confidentially; Rights; Questions and Consent.



Consent for
Participation in Inte

3. Participants right of withdrawal

- Participants will be reminded of their right of withdrawal. They can choose to not answer if they feel uncomfortable with the questions both in the survey and interviews.
- If the participant chooses not to be audiotaped, it will be replaced by note-taking.
- If the participant feels uncomfortable at any time during the interview, he/she can choose to ask for turning off the recording
- If the participant does not wish to continue, he/she can stop the interview at any time.

4. Informed consent

- The survey and interviews will be conducted in a voluntary basis.
- A written consent will be granted for the interviews.

5. Complaints procedure

The email address of the researcher will be given to the participants. The participants can contact the research to raise their concerns

6. Anonymity/ confidentiality

The strictest confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study.

Except when they agree to be interviewed, they are not required to provide their names or contact information for the completion of the survey.

In the survey, no distinguishing data on the survey would identify their schools.

Coded names will be used in the data collection for documents stored and the publication and presentations.

7. Data collection

Data are collected by sending a questionnaire survey and interviews. The survey is sent by email or a link to a Google form. All survey results are compiled into Excel files which will be accessed by the researcher only and the participants are not able to view the results of others, though it is allowed in the Google Forms.

Interviews will be audiotaped if the participant gives the permission. However, note-taking will be used to collect the data. Participants can ask for the interview not to be recorded or stopping the interview if he/she feels uncomfortable at any time during the interview.

Identifying information like name, contact information e.g. email address, phone number collected from the questionnaire or interview consents will be used for contacting the participants for interviews or follow-up interviews. They will not be included in the report. Study codes will be used on data collection instruments in place of identifying information to protect participants' responses when data documents are stored.

8. Data analysis

Data will be reported in descriptive or aggregate form without identification of individuals or schools for the questionnaire. For interviews, identification of individuals or schools will also not be disclosed. Code names will be used to identify of the participants or their schools

9. Data storage

In the process, the survey data are collected and saved in the Google Drive. To minimize the risks to access to the data, all data will be stored in a password locked desktop and will be retained for the research purpose only.

All original recording, transcripts and email records will be deleted permanently after the completion of the dissertation.

If you feel you need to discuss any issue further, or to highlight difficulties, please contact the GSoE's ethics co-ordinators who will suggest possible ways forward.

Signed: [REDACTED] (Researcher) Signed: [REDACTED] (Discussant)
Date: [REDACTED]

Appendix 2 – Cover Letter for the Survey

Dear all,

My name is Ruth Wong. As a Doctor of Education candidate at the University of Bristol, I am conducting a study about international teacher experiences and factors associated with teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong. Your participation is totally voluntary. However, I would truly appreciate if you would consider completing this web-based survey. The survey takes around 5-10 minutes to fill in.

The strictest confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study. Except that you agree to be interviewed, your responses on this survey are anonymous. For any question you feel not comfortable, you are free not to answer. Furthermore, data will be reported in descriptive or aggregate form without identification of individuals and will be used for my doctoral dissertation only. Data will be removed after the completion of the dissertation.

Any concerns or questions about this study, please feel free to contact me at kw12076@bristol.ac.uk or ruthwong1804@gmail.com

Fill in the survey here. Please click: <https://goo.gl/forms/qSTg6YXIm0uyzE4C2>

I sincerely thank you for your participation. I would be so grateful if you could email this survey to another teachers you know.

Thanks a lot and sincerely,
Ruth

Appendix 3 - Survey

My name is Ruth Wong. As a Doctor of Education candidate at the University of Bristol, I am conducting a study about international teacher experiences and factors associated with teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong. Your participation is totally voluntary. However, I would truly appreciate if you would consider completing this web-based survey. The survey takes around 5-10 minutes to fill in.

The strictest confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study. Except that you agree to be interviewed, your responses on this survey are anonymous. For any question you feel not comfortable, you are free not to answer. Furthermore, data will be reported in descriptive or aggregate form without identification of individuals and will be used for my doctoral dissertation only. Data will be removed after the completion of the dissertation.

Any concerns or questions about this study, please feel free to contact me at kw12076@bristol.ac.uk or ruthwong1804@gmail.com

Section One: Qualifications and Experience

1. Are/Were you a teacher at an international school in Hong Kong currently or in the past?
☐ Yes please go to Question 2
☐ No (Thank you taking part in the survey; this survey is looking for people who are or have been teachers in an international schools; thus your responses for following questions are no longer required)
☐ Other, ,please specify: _____
2. What is/was your position?
☐ Teacher
☐ Administration
☐ Others, please specify: _____
3. What grade(s) are you teaching (What grade did you teach?) _____
4. How long have you worked in Hong Kong? _____
5. How many schools have you worked in Hong Kong? _____

Section Two: Your Opinions

6. Indicate the level of importance EACH of the following played in **your decision to consider leaving your home country**(Mark (X) one box on each line)

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Low compensation and benefits in my country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Family obligations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Political instability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Safety environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Poor working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Improvement in living conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Less job security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Look for better job opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other reason(s) not included above to cause you leaving your home country:

7. Indicate the level of importance **EACH** of the following played in **YOUR DECISION TO TEACH IN HONG KONG**. Please check one box on each line.

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Higher compensation and benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Family ties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. More job opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Political stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. More economic and social stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Better living conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Better working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Professional development interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

j. Desire to work and live in different cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Intercultural experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other reason(s) not included above to cause you teaching in Hong Kong

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Please check one box on each line.

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
a. I am/was satisfied with teaching/working in Hong Kong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I am planning to stay and teach in Hong Kong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I think teacher turnover is high in international schools in Hong Kong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The teacher turnover rate is/was high at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Indicate the level of importance EACH of the following played in your decision to LEAVE teaching in Hong Kong. Please check one box on each line.

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
--	-------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------	------------------------

	1	2	3	4	5
a. Job availability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Opportunities for professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Opportunities for promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Autonomy or control over your own work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Working conditions (e.g. facilities, classroom resources, teaching assignments)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Recognition and support from administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Administrative leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Safety of environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Degree of Cultural adjustment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Sense of personal accomplishment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Family matters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Cost of living and living condition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Challenges of cultural shock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. Social relationships with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Teacher input in decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. Student discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. Ability to balance personal life and work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. Workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
w. Job satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
x. Commitment to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. From the items above, which do you consider the most important reason in your decision to <u>leave</u> your teaching job in Hong Kong? <input type="checkbox"/> Most important (Enter the letter from items above)					
11. Other reason(s) not included above to cause you leaving Hong Kong:					

12. Do you plan to work in other countries apart from your home country?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Maybe

Section Three: Personal Details

13. What is your age?

- ☐ Below 20 ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ above 60 ☐ Prefer not to say

14. What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say

15. What is your citizenship? _____

16. What is your current marital status?

- ☐ Single
☐ Married
☐ Widowed
☐ Separated
☐ Divorced
☐ Prefer not to say

17. Do you have any children? ☐ Yes (Please go to Q18) ☐ No (Please go to Q21)

18. How many dependent children do you have residing with you? _____

19. Are you a permanent Hong Kong citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Do you currently hold an expatriate contract? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21. Are you still living in Hong Kong?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No (if possible, please fill out your current destination below)
☐ I will be leaving Hong Kong soon

If you have moved away from Hong Kong, where is your current destination?

22. Are you able to participate in the interview?

- ☐ Yes, please leave your contact information:

☐ No

23. School Name (International school(s) you are serving/ you served in Hong Kong)

Thank you for participating in the research!!

If possible, please help to forward this survey to other current and past international school teachers in Hong Kong.

Online Form: <https://goo.gl/forms/XTB7SqNwozqChwUW2>

Appendix 4 – Consent for Participation in Interview Research

Consent to Participate in Research Interview

Proposed research project:

“Goodbye Hong Kong: Teacher Turnover in International Schools in Hong Kong”

Introduction and Purpose

My name is Ruth Wong, a Doctor of Education candidate at University of Bristol. I am conducting a study on international school teaching experiences and investigating factors associated with teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong. I would like to invite you to take part in my research study.

Procedures

If you agree to participate in a face to face interview in person or online synchronous interview, I will conduct the interview with you at a time and location or online media of your choice. The interview will involve questions about factors you considered when you moved to teach in Hong Kong and the decision process for moving out of Hong Kong. It should last about *15 minutes*.

With your permission, I will audiotape and take notes during the interview. The recording will be used for transcription for data analysis. If you choose not to be audiotaped, I will take notes instead. If you agree to being audiotaped but feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview, I can turn off the recording at your request. Or if you don't wish to continue, you can stop the interview at any time.

I expect to conduct only one interview; however, follow-ups may be needed for added clarification. If so, I will contact you by mail/phone/messenger to request this.

If you are unable to attend the interview in person or online, an email interview will be taken place instead. A list of questions will be provided in the email and please respond to the questions by emailing. For those questions, you feel uncomfortable, you can choose not to respond that.

Benefits

There is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study. However, your participation will be important for providing data in terms of the investigation of expatriate teacher turnover in international schools in Hong Kong.

Confidentiality

Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. Data will be reported in descriptive or aggregate form without identification of individuals or schools.

To minimize the risks to access to the data, all data will be stored in a personal computer with the security limit and will be retained for the research purpose only. All original recording, transcripts and email records will be deleted permanently after the completion of the dissertation.

Rights

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You can decline to answer any questions and choose to answer a question.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at contact me at kw12076@bristol.ac.uk or ruthwong1804@gmail.com.

CONSENT

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your own records.

If you wish to participate in this study, please sign and date below.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Signature : _____

(electronic signature is acceptable)

Contact Email: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5 – Interview questions

1. Where is your home country?
2. How long have you been in Hong Kong?
3. What is your school name you are serving right now?
4. What factors caused you to leave your home country to teach?
5. Why did you choose Hong Kong to teach?
6. Have you planned how long you would stay here when you arrived?
7. What are important factors which lead you to decide to stay or leave Hong Kong? (What factor will pull you to stay? What factor will push you to leave?)
8. If you decided to leave Hong Kong, what do you think is the major reason?
9. Do you have a struggle time to make your decision of staying or leaving?
10. Do you think teacher turnover is high in international schools in Hong Kong?
11. What are the most common reasons teachers leave the school?
12. How do you feel about teaching in the international school in Hong Kong?

Appendix 6 – Sample of Research Journal

Interview with Diana

Interview date: January 17, 2018

Diana has been working in Hong Kong for the third contracts. At the beginning she just planned to stay for 2 years but continues to stay until now.

The major reason for her to move to Hong Kong was due to the attractive salary which allowed her to pay off the loans she borrowed for learning. Also teaching in Hong Kong allows her to have a professional growth. She is an IB qualified teacher thus she found an IB school in Hong Kong.

She did not plan to leave so far as she is satisfied with the salary, working environment and stable life in Hong Kong. If she moves, she may consider the family especially her daughter more and her personal professional growth as she wants to pursue for the PhD and see the availability of job options. As she describes, she is juggling between professional goals and personal goals.

Diana thinks the turnover rate of international schools, 20% to 30% she guesses, is high when compared to private schools. She worked in one international school in Barbados and now working in one international schools. She notices even in a same school, there is a core group of staff who have been working for years and years. There's another set of mobile teachers who seem to be come in and out and stay for two years or four years and then move out.

According to Diana, teaching job in the international school is very stressful. Class size is large and the expectation of parents is high. However, there are a lot of professional development opportunities.

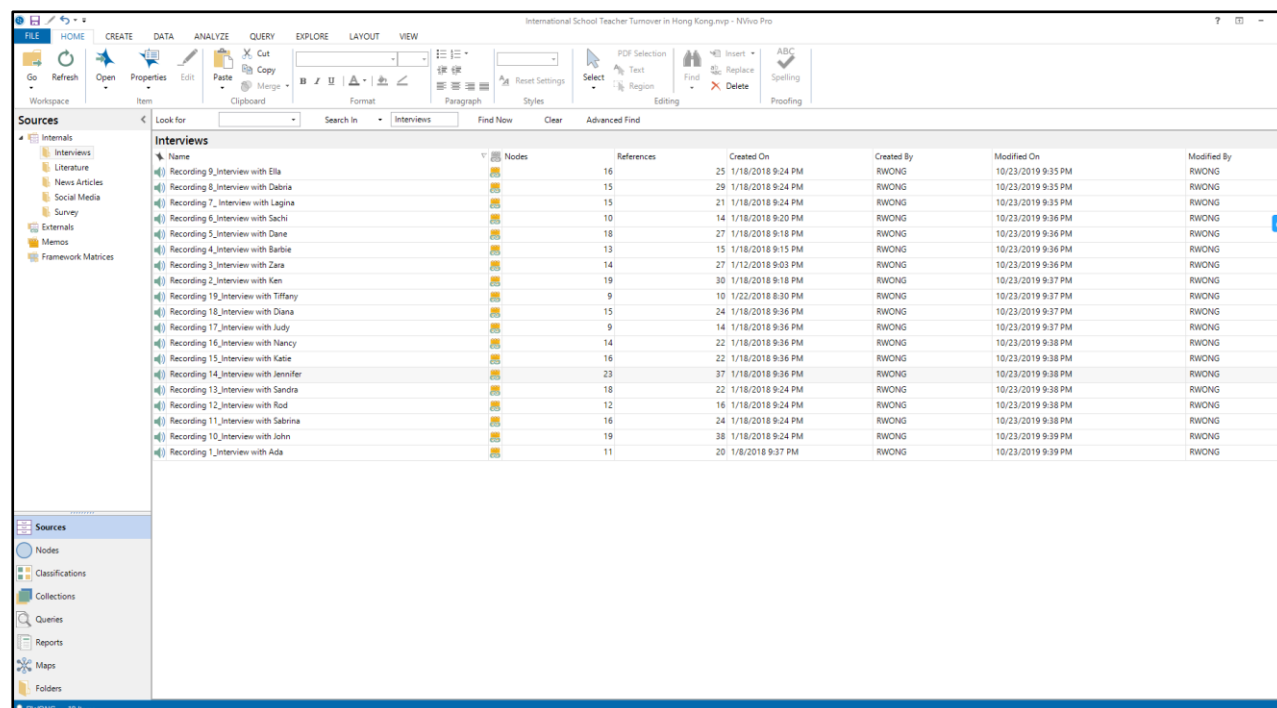
Thoughts:

Mobility may not be caused by a single factor. Factors may change with time, age, change of family structure. A person is always juggling with the options and considerations in terms of personal and work-related. International schools tend to invest in technology and pioneer in teaching methodology. That facilitates the professional development of the staff. That may be stressful but rewarding and let the staff more movable.

Linked Item: Internals\\Interviews\\Recording 18_Diana

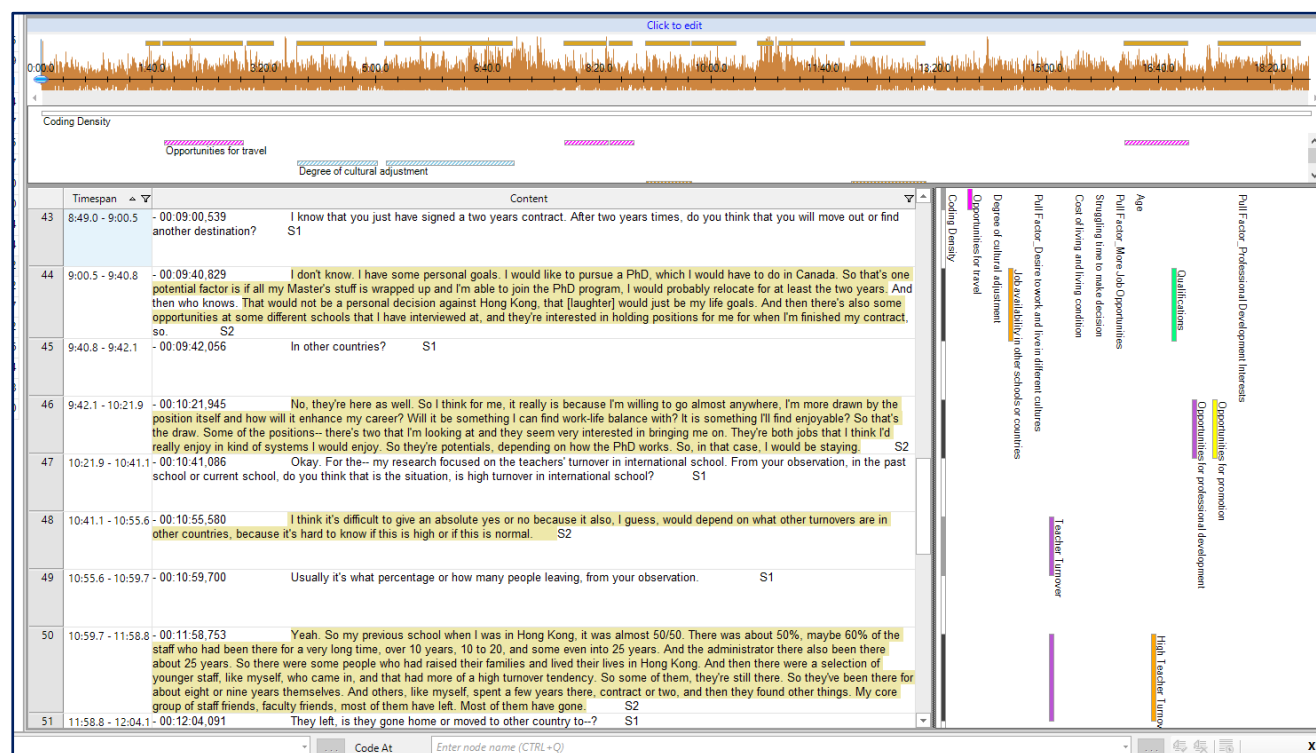
Appendix 7 – Codes in the Nvivo

List of interviews with the audio records, transcripts and interview journals (memo)



Name	Nodes	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Recording 9_Interview with Ella	16	25	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:35 PM	RWONG
Recording 8_Interview with Dabria	15	29	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:35 PM	RWONG
Recording 7_Interview with Lagina	15	21	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:35 PM	RWONG
Recording 6_Interview with Sachi	10	14	1/18/2018 9:20 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:36 PM	RWONG
Recording 5_Interview with Dane	18	27	1/18/2018 9:18 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:36 PM	RWONG
Recording 4_Interview with Barbie	13	15	1/18/2018 9:15 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:36 PM	RWONG
Recording 3_Interview with Zara	14	27	1/12/2018 9:03 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:36 PM	RWONG
Recording 2_Interview with Ken	19	30	1/18/2018 9:18 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:37 PM	RWONG
Recording 19_Interview with Tiffany	9	10	1/22/2018 8:30 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:37 PM	RWONG
Recording 18_Interview with Diana	15	24	1/18/2018 9:36 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:37 PM	RWONG
Recording 17_Interview with Judy	9	14	1/18/2018 9:36 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:37 PM	RWONG
Recording 16_Interview with Nancy	14	22	1/18/2018 9:36 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:38 PM	RWONG
Recording 15_Interview with Katie	16	22	1/18/2018 9:36 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:38 PM	RWONG
Recording 14_Interview with Jennifer	23	37	1/18/2018 9:36 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:38 PM	RWONG
Recording 13_Interview with Sandra	18	22	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:38 PM	RWONG
Recording 12_Interview with Rod	12	16	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:38 PM	RWONG
Recording 11_Interview with Sabrina	16	24	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:38 PM	RWONG
Recording 10_Interview with John	19	38	1/18/2018 9:24 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:39 PM	RWONG
Recording 1_Interview with Ada	11	20	1/8/2018 9:37 PM	RWONG	10/23/2019 9:39 PM	RWONG

Analyzing audio sources and coding the transcripts with the relevant nodes



Click to edit

Coding Density

Opportunities for travel

Degree of cultural adjustment

Timespan	Content	Coding Density
43 8:49.0 - 9:00.5	- 00:09:00.539 I know that you just have signed a two years contract. After two years times, do you think that you will move out or find another destination? S1	
44 9:00.5 - 9:40.8	- 00:09:40.829 I don't know. I have some personal goals. I would like to pursue a PhD, which I would have to do in Canada. So that's one potential factor is if all my Master's stuff is wrapped up and I'm able to join the PhD program, I would probably relocate for at least the two years. And then who knows. That would not be a personal decision against Hong Kong, that [laughter] would just be my life goals. And then there's also some opportunities at some different schools that I have interviewed at, and they're interested in holding positions for me for when I'm finished my contract, so S2	
45 9:40.8 - 9:42.1	- 00:09:42.056 In other countries? S1	
46 9:42.1 - 10:21.9	- 00:10:21.945 No, they're here as well. So I think for me, it really is because I'm willing to go almost anywhere, I'm more drawn by the position itself and how will it enhance my career? Will it be something I can find work-life balance with? It is something I'll find enjoyable? So that's the draw. Some of the positions-- there's two that I'm looking at and they seem very interested in bringing me on. They're both jobs that I think I'd really enjoy in kind of systems I would enjoy. So they're potentials, depending on how the PhD works. So, in that case, I would be staying. S2	
47 10:21.9 - 10:41.1	- 00:10:41.086 Okay. For the-- my research focused on the teachers' turnover in international school. From your observation, in the past school or current school, do you think that is the situation, is high turnover in international school? S1	
48 10:41.1 - 10:55.6	- 00:10:55.580 I think it's difficult to give an absolute yes or no because it also, I guess, would depend on what other turnovers are in other countries, because it's hard to know if this is high or if this is normal. S2	
49 10:55.6 - 10:59.7	- 00:10:59.700 Usually it's what percentage or how many people leaving, from your observation. S1	
50 10:59.7 - 11:58.8	- 00:11:58.753 Yeah. So my previous school when I was in Hong Kong, it was almost 50/50. There was about 50%, maybe 60% of the staff who had been there for a very long time, over 10 years, 10 to 20, and some even into 25 years. And the administrator there also been there about 25 years. So there were some people who had raised their families and lived their lives in Hong Kong. And then there were a selection of younger staff, like myself, who came in, and that had more of a high turnover tendency. So some of them, they're still there. So they've been there for about eight or nine years themselves. And others, like myself, spent a few years there, contract or two, and then they found other things. My core group of staff friends, faculty friends, most of them have left. Most of them have gone. S2	
51 11:58.8 - 12:04.1	- 00:12:04.091 They left, is they gone home or moved to other country to--? S1	

Code At Enter node name (CTRL+Q)

Creating nodes and node hierarchies

The screenshot displays the NVivo Pro software interface. The main workspace shows a node hierarchy for the project 'International School Teacher Turnover in Hong Kong.mvp'. The nodes are organized into a tree structure on the left, and a table on the right lists the details of each node.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Factors of Teacher Turnover		0	0 1/21/2018 9:51 PM	RWONG	1/21/2018 9:51 PM	RWONG
External Economy		2	2 1/21/2018 9:51 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 8:20 PM	RWONG
Individual non-work variables		1	1 1/21/2018 9:59 PM	RWONG	2/21/2018 5:02 PM	RWONG
Age		8	8 1/21/2018 10:01 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 3:49 PM	RWONG
retirement		1	1 2/20/2018 9:47 PM	RWONG	2/20/2018 9:47 PM	RWONG
Challenges of culture shock		1	2 1/21/2018 10:02 PM	RWONG	2/22/2018 4:47 PM	RWONG
Cost of living and living condition		30	30 1/21/2018 10:02 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 3:56 PM	RWONG
Degree of cultural adjustment		5	9 1/21/2018 10:01 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 3:40 PM	RWONG
Family matters		12	18 1/21/2018 10:01 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 8:18 PM	RWONG
Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration		6	13 1/21/2018 10:00 PM	RWONG	2/24/2018 3:53 PM	RWONG
Safety of environment		7	9 1/21/2018 10:00 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 2:51 PM	RWONG
Sense of personal accomplishment		4	4 1/21/2018 10:01 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 6:21 PM	RWONG
Visa		1	2 2/19/2018 8:54 PM	RWONG	2/19/2018 8:55 PM	RWONG
Individual work related variables		0	0 1/21/2018 10:02 PM	RWONG	1/21/2018 10:02 PM	RWONG
Ability to balance personal life and work		0	0 1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG	1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG
Commitment to work		1	1 1/21/2018 10:08 PM	RWONG	2/19/2018 8:12 PM	RWONG
Job satisfaction		3	3 1/21/2018 10:08 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 6:04 PM	RWONG
Qualifications		4	4 2/23/2018 3:58 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 5:46 PM	RWONG
Social relationships with colleagues		3	3 1/21/2018 10:06 PM	RWONG	2/22/2018 12:09 PM	RWONG
Student discipline		0	0 1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG	1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG
Teacher input in decision making		1	1 1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG	2/19/2018 8:07 PM	RWONG
Workload		0	0 1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG	1/21/2018 10:07 PM	RWONG
Organizational Variables		0	0 1/21/2018 9:52 PM	RWONG	1/21/2018 9:52 PM	RWONG
Administrative leadership		4	6 1/21/2018 9:57 PM	RWONG	2/22/2018 11:47 AM	RWONG
Autonomy or control over your own work		2	3 1/21/2018 9:56 PM	RWONG	2/20/2018 9:45 PM	RWONG
Benefits e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax		3	4 1/21/2018 9:55 PM	RWONG	2/22/2018 12:11 PM	RWONG
Opportunities for professional development		7	15 1/21/2018 9:55 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 6:11 PM	RWONG
Opportunities for promotion		4	5 1/21/2018 9:56 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 3:45 PM	RWONG
Recognition and support from administration		4	5 1/21/2018 9:57 PM	RWONG	2/22/2018 4:48 PM	RWONG
Salary		7	15 1/21/2018 9:54 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 5:46 PM	RWONG
Working conditions		7	10 1/21/2018 9:56 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 5:42 PM	RWONG
Period of stays		16	26 2/10/2018 4:47 PM	RWONG	2/23/2018 8:13 PM	RWONG

Appendix 8 – Profiles of Interview Participants

Teaching Level	Frequency	Percentage
Kindergarten (K)	0	0.00%
Primary	9	47.37%
Secondary	5	26.32%
Multiple Sections	5	26.32%
Total	19	100.00%
Teaching Years	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 2	3	15.79%
3 to 4	5	26.32%
5 to 6	2	10.53%
7 to 8	1	5.26%
9 to 10	2	10.53%
11 to 12	2	10.53%
13 to 14	2	10.53%
15 or above	2	10.53%
Total	19	100.00%
Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20 (1)	0	0.00%
21-30 (2)	4	21.05%
31-40 (3)	6	31.58%
41-50 (4)	8	42.11%
51-60 (5)	1	5.26%
above 60 (6)	0	0.00%
Total	19	100.00%
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	4	21.05%
Female	14	73.68%
Prefer not to say	1	5.26%
Total	19	100.00%
Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
American	2	10.53%
Australian	2	10.53%
Barbados	1	5.26%
British	4	21.05%
Canadian	7	36.84%
Chinese	1	5.26%
Indian	2	10.53%
Total	19	100.00%

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
single	6	31.58%
married	11	57.89%
widowed	0	0.00%
separated	1	5.26%
divorced	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	1	5.26%
Total	19	100.00%
Children	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	11	57.89%
No	8	42.11%
Total	19	100.00%
Permanent HK	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	36.84%
No	12	63.16%
Total	19	100.00%
Are you still living in Hong Kong?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	73.68%
No	5	26.32%
Total	19	100.00%
Do you plan to work in other countries apart from your home country?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	68.42%
No	2	10.53%
Maybe	4	21.05%
Total	19	100.00%

Appendix 9 – Interviewee’s responses in the survey

		Q10. Which do you consider the MOST important REASON in your decision to leave your teaching job in Hong Kong?	Q11. Other reason(s) not included above to cause you leaving Hong Kong	Q21. Are you still living in Hong Kong?
1.	Lagina	b. Salary	If I leave, it will be for a better opportunity in another country. No plans to go home to America.	Yes
2.	Ella	c. Benefits (e.g. health insurance, retirement plan, bonus, lower tax)	No family leave.	Yes
3.	Dabria	d. Opportunities for professional development		Yes
4.	Nancy	h. Recognition and support from administration		Yes
5.	Zara	k. Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration		Yes
6.	Jennifer	k. Opportunities for travel and cultural exploration		Yes
7.	Dane	n. Family matters		Yes
8.	Ada	n. Family matters		No – in Canada
9.	Barbie	n. Family matters	Student debt (OSAP) was paid off, ready to go into the public sector	No – in Canada
10.	Diana	n. Family matters		Yes
11.	Judy	n. Family matters	Spouse’s job	Yes
12.	Katie	n. Family matters	Spouse’s job	Yes
13.	Sabrina	n. Family matters	My husband, who is not a teacher and had moved to HK when we first met, could not get a good, high paying job.	No – in Seoul
14.	Tiffany	n. Family matters	Husband got a job in Europe not able to find a suitable job in HK or Asia in his field	No – in Switzerland
15.	John	p. Cost of living and living condition	Pollution-poor air quality	Yes
16.	Rod	p. Cost of living and living condition	Work balance	Yes
17.	Sachi	q. Challenges of cultural shock	Discrimination	Yes
18.	Ken	s. Teacher input in decision making		No – in Canada
19.	Sandra	u. Ability to balance personal life and work	Still here	Yes